

BRIDGING THE RELATIONAL GAP BETWEEN
THE CONGREGATION AND THE
SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

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The context of this project is the First African Baptist Church, Lexington, KY. Based on the candidate's ministerial experience and context of ministry analysis, it is apparent there exist a relational divide between the congregation and community. The candidate hypothesizes FABC if properly led will embrace a congregational outreach ministry vision designed to bridge the relational gap. The candidate will utilize the qualitative case study research approach for testing a ministry model designed to equip a congregation for engaging in the work of outreach ministry.

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DEDICATION

Proverbs 18:22 states, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.” Some twenty-plus years ago, the Lord favored me to find “my good thing!” I dedicate this work to my good thing, my best thing second only to Jesus, my everything, my wife, Evelyn F. Moore. Thank you so very much for being a true support and partner in life and ministry! May God bless you richly for being such a rich blessing to one His chosen vessels. I love you “Sweetie!”

I would also like to dedicate this work to those four blessings who call me Dad and Papi. Thank you for your prayers and words of encouragement. May God bless you for all the sacrifices you have made over the years for me to give my best to the ministry! I love you dearly Antoinette, Corynn, Michael and Nyalyn!

ABBREVIATIONS

DMin	Doctor of Ministry
ESV	English Standard Version
FABC	First African Baptist Church
GARBC	General Association of Regular Baptist Churches
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
NBC USA Inc.	National Baptist Convention USA Incorporated
NIV	New International Version
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NLT	New Living Translation
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
SBC	Southern Baptist Convention
SM	Sermon On The Mount
SP	Sermon On The Plain
TEV	Today's English Version

INTRODUCTION

How does a boy become a man and a man become a king? How does a son bring honor to his father and mother while securing the favor and esteem of God and man? How does a person birthed with purpose know which roads to travel in pursuit of their life's destiny? Found in the wisdom-laced literature of King Solomon in the book of Proverbs is the answer to these probing questions. According to David's son and successor in Proverbs 3:5-6, the key to becoming a successful king; the key to growing into an honorable son; and the key to fulfilling divinely appointed purposes is to "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths."¹ Solomon's posited guarantee of the invisible God's intervention in the lives of individuals has impacted many saints down through the corridors of time. This proverbial text of promise has served as a spiritual linchpin in the Doctor of Ministry candidate's life story. In traceable and tangible ways the transcendent God has been an immanent presence navigating his faith journey through this odyssey called life.

On June 27, 2009, God directed the path of the DMin aspirant to accept the call to become the fourteenth pastor of First African Baptist Church in Lexington, KY. FABC was founded in 1790 under the leadership of a slave from Virginia named Peter "Old

¹ Proverbs 3:5-6, New King James Version. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are from the NKJV.

Captain” Durrett. Some consider the congregation, according to the National Register of Historic Places, to be the third oldest Black Baptist Church in the United States. Though disputed by some, most consider the congregation to be the oldest Black Baptist Church in the state of Kentucky. On Sunday, August 16, 2009, the candidate preached his first sermon as pastor and officially installed as pastor of the historic church on Sunday, October 18, 2009. Before the DMin candidate’s pastorate, FABC’s church motto was “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” As impressed upon him by divine influence, the fourteenth pastor’s pastoral assignment is to turn the church’s motto into a church reality. Now, FABC’s congregational mission is to truly become “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.”

In May 2011, the DMin aspirant received his Masters of Divinity from Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, KY. In August 2014, God guided the path of FABC’s fourteenth pastor to begin pursuing his doctorate of ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH. The scholastic pursuit for continued theological and ministerial development has proven to be extremely beneficial to the candidate and the congregation. The journey has provided tools for accessing and enhancing personal, ministerial and congregational growth. Based on the ministerial experience, educational training, and contextual analysis of FABC, the candidate’s DMin project emerged.

The greatest threat to FABC becoming “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community” is an almost non-existent relationship between the church and the surrounding community. If FABC’s current pastor is going to lead the church in achieving her congregation goal, he must lead the church in bridging the relational gap between the congregation and community. The DMin student believes the church can

build mutually beneficial inroads into the neighborhood by serving the residents through congregational outreach initiatives. As such, the primary objective of the DMin candidate's project is to develop a model of ministry which will shepherd the FABC family into embracing and executing a congregational outreach ministry vision.

The remaining portion of the document will provide the following. Chapter one will detail the steps taken in arriving at the proposed model of ministry. The chapter will feature the candidate's ministerial, educational and professional journey. Also featured will be a historical and demographic analysis of FABC and her neighborhood. Chapter two will present the biblical exegesis of the two texts serving as a scriptural foundation for the project. Chapter three will establish a historical basis for the project by highlighting a nineteenth-century example of how a church outreach initiative can be instrumental in impacting social transformation. Chapter four will lay the theological groundwork for the proposed model of ministry by building an ecclesiological argument for congregational outreach ministry. Chapter five will examine evangelistic ideologies and methodologies which will serve as the theoretical support for model development, implementation, and testing. The chapter will also explore the social discipline of anthropology and its effectiveness in achieving model success. Concluding the document will be chapter six's project analysis. The chapter will detail the proposed model's development, implementation, and successfulness in achieving the project's desired goals and primary objective.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

The First African Baptist Church in Lexington, KY was founded in 1790. FABC is the oldest Black Baptist Church in the state of Kentucky. This historic congregation will serve as the DMin candidate's context of ministry. FABC currently resides in an economically disadvantaged community in the West End area of Lexington, KY. FABC is a church with a rich history and a bright future. However, in recent years this congregation has struggled with a declining, aging and inwardly focused membership. The congregation also suffers from the reputation of being an elitist, exclusive, ecclesiastically strict congregation. FABC's mission is to be "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." Achieving her mission will require addressing the issues of congregational reputation and the lack of community interaction. Perhaps related to these areas of concern is the challenge of preserving the church's rich history while remaining relevant in ministry. This doctoral candidate's faith formation, practical ministry exposure, pastoral ministry experience and theological education have prepared him for such a time as this in the life of FABC. The candidate believes First African can accomplish her mission and rehabilitate her reputation by implementing a model of ministry which leads the congregation in serving the community through

outreach ministry as a means of bridging the relational gap between the congregation and community.

Context of Ministry Review

Being founded some two years before Kentucky officially became a state on June 1, 1792, First African Baptist Church has been a part of the historic fabric of the Commonwealth of Kentucky since 1790. First African Baptist Church was birthed into existence by a slave from Virginia named Peter "Old Captain" Durrett. Through the divine providence of God, Durrett established the congregation to achieve the purpose of meeting the spiritual, social and emotional needs of slaves in and around the city of Lexington. Under the leadership of Durrett's successor London Ferrill, the congregation reached a membership size of 1,820 by 1854. One of the lasting accomplishments of Ferrill was the purchase and relocation of the congregation to the corner of Short and Deweese Streets in the heart of downtown Lexington. For 154 years, the site would serve as a place of worship, a community gathering venue and a center of cultural enlightenment and enrichment for Lexington blacks. Following the end of the Civil War, FABC's 4th pastor, James Monroe, and the church embraced the cause of education. In the fall of 1865, FABC opened a school for black students in Lexington. Also in August of 1865, Monroe along with eleven Kentucky Black Baptist pastors assembled to establish a college for blacks in the state of Kentucky. They finally achieved their goal on November 25, 1897, with the opening of the educational institution known today as Simmons College of Kentucky. The denominational outcome of their meeting was the formation of a state convention known today as the General Association of Baptists in

Kentucky. Since her inception, FABC has shared a prominent role in shaping the lives of African Americans in the city of Lexington and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The First African Church reached her zenith of notoriety during the fifty-year administration of her twelfth pastor, Rev. Dr. Homer E. Nutter. Under his leadership, the church grew numerically, financially and influentially. Nutter's successor, Rev. Dr. Leon H. McIntyre led the church in arguably its most significant accomplishment of the last 150 years. On July 12, 1987, Dr. McIntyre and the congregants of FABC closed the doors on the old meeting house, marched in a processional motorcade and opened the doors to a new \$1.5 million dollar edifice located at 465 Price Road. This feat was a major development and turning point in the life of FABC. The relocation to this site plays a major factor in determining the trajectory of the congregation's future growth and present day call to Christian ministry.

FABC resides in a portion of the urban core of Lexington called the West End. To be more specific, FABC is in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End. This portion of the West End is inside of what is referred to as the New Circle Road loop. New Circle Road is a highway which completely encircles the city with the University of Kentucky and Downtown Lexington at the center. It indirectly functions as a geographical, political and socio-economic divide. Inside the loop is considered urban Lexington. Outside the loop is seen as suburban Lexington. Except for the Downtown and Historic District of urban Lexington, life inside the loop is not as affluent as outside the loop. Homes, buildings, and lots reflecting the age, usage, vibrancy and vitality of a previous era primarily decorates the physical landscape of FABC's portion of the West End. FABC's neighborhood is economically and educationally disadvantaged with a high

concentration of crime. The neighborhood is predominantly African-American with an increasing Hispanic population. Booker T. Washington Elementary is the only school in this area serving grades K thru 5. Only 17% of BTW's student population reads at proficiency level, and only 30% is proficient in other subjects such as math and science. 92% of the community has less than a college degree. The unemployment rate is 11.4% more than double that of Lexington's overall 5.3% unemployment rate. Lexington's median income is \$50,279. The corridor's median income is \$24,641, roughly \$1300 above Kentucky's poverty level.

First African's membership demographic is quite different from residents of the surrounding community. FABC is a senior-heavy populated church. 50% of the congregation is 65+ years of age. 30% of the membership is between the ages of 40-65. 5% is 12-20 years old, and 10% is under the age of 12. The estimated median income level of the church is consistent with Lexington's \$50,279 median income level. 75-80% of the congregation has received some level of post-secondary education and or training. Of that percentage, 60% are college graduates. Approximately 50% of the congregation lives outside the New Circle loop. About 20% lives inside the circle but not in the West End. While an estimated 30% of the congregation lives in or near of the West End, only 10% lives within the Georgetown Street Corridor. In comparing and contrasting church and neighborhood data, potential social and cultural barriers to relationship building immediately emerge.

FABC's church mission is to be "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." Fulfillment of the mission calls for FABC to be a hospitable, holy, healthy and helping church. FABC must be a hospitable church. It is the church's desire

to welcome any and everybody into our place of worship and church family with open arms of love. Secondly, FABC must be a holy church. The goal is to not only worship God with our lips but also with our whole heart. As a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, congregants want to live out the standards and teachings of Jesus Christ. Thirdly, the FABC family must be a healthy church. As such, the congregational objective is to edify each member of the body physically, financially and spiritually. Edification of each member enables the membership to serve Christ efficiently and efficaciously both personally and congregationally. Finally, FABC must also be a helping church. The church's aim as disciples of Jesus Christ is to share the love of Christ by having compassion on the multitudes. As Christ went about teaching, healing and meeting needs, the members of FABC are called upon to make the same impact on the community beyond the walls of the congregation.

Answering the call of The Great Commission is achieved by striving towards the accomplishment of the church's mission. FABC cannot fully realize her mission unless the church repairs the relational divide currently existing between the local congregation and the surrounding community. However, there are some hurdles to overcome if the membership is to reach her congregational aspirations. For one, the church must deal with a senior heavy, aging population which has no externally focused church ministries. Secondly, church and community demographic disparities present obstacles hindering the building of church-community relationships. Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the congregation is the needed rehabilitation of a negative community reputation. The church has a reputation for being exclusive, cold and tradition-oriented. Members of the congregation have identified this as a major roadblock to building the kind of

relationships necessary for evangelism, church growth, and community interaction. While the attitudes, tone, and tenure of today's membership are antithetical to those of the past, the church still suffers from an unfavorable opinion of her among the broader community. Another challenging dynamic is the preservation and utilization of our rich and unique church history. Somehow, just recapitulating that history once a year during an annual Church Anniversary celebration is not enough. FABC can use her history to propel the congregation in the implementation of initiatives designed to meet the needs of today's community. In so doing, the church will not just live off the history but will build new chapters onto the history as she ministers to her neighbors in West End.

Spiritual Autobiography Review

The doctoral student is a native of Huntsville, AL. The oldest of Harold and Delois Moore's two sons. He is married to the former Evelyn Faye Scott of Pittsburgh, PA and is a father of four. He is in his early forties and resides in Georgetown, KY. The doctoral candidate is a graduate of Tuskegee University. He received his Master of Divinity degree from Lexington Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary. The Doctor of Ministry aspirant accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior and was baptized under the pastorate of Rev. T. C. Johnson of the St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church in Huntsville, AL at the age of twelve. Under the pastorate of Rev. W. D. Billups of New Life Missionary Baptist Church in Cincinnati, OH, acknowledged his call to preach the gospel on December 6, 1998, and preached his initial sermon on April 11, 1999. He was licensed to the work of the gospel ministry on October 31, 1999, and ordained into the pastoral ministry on September 8,

2002. Served as pastor of the Centerville Missionary Baptist Church from August 2002 to August of 2009 and has been serving as the pastor of First African Baptist Church since August 2009. Through spiritual, theological and professional development, the Lord has prepared the doctoral candidate for the pastoral assignment of helping First African become “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.”

Some of the tools the candidate possesses for ministry were garnered during his tenure as the Pastor-Administrator of Christ Community In College Hill (CCCH). Upon graduating from Tuskegee in May of 1996, he accepted employment with Ethicon-Endo Surgery (EES) as a Computer Analyst in June of 1996. Shortly after answering the call to the preaching ministry he left EES in August of 2000 for the work of full-time ministry with CCCH. CCCH is an ecumenical community outreach ministry supported by churches spanning over seven different denominations in the College Hill community of Cincinnati, OH. CCCH primarily served the community through its six-week summer youth camp, food pantry, and rent/utilities assistance program. The time with CCCH immersed the doctoral aspirant into the field of community outreach and practical ministry. Involvement with CCCH introduced him to Rev. Strayhorn, a black Baptist pastor, and Rev. Harold "Chappie" Chapman, a white Presbyterian retired pastor and missionary. These two men were the pillars of the forty-plus-year-old community ministry. Rev. Strayhorn cultivated the skills of organizational administration and transitional leadership. The value and challenges of being a bridge in the community were gleaned from Rev. Chapman. A bridge he shared one day “has the privilege of connecting people on opposite sides, but it has to endure the stress of being walked on by both sides.” The ministry context of CCCH taught how to connect and communicate with

people from various backgrounds and diverse beliefs. CCCH also developed an understanding of what it truly meant to serve those whom Jesus referred to as “the least of these” in Matthew 25:40. The ministry of CCCH and the mentoring of Billups, Strayhorn, and Chapman, provided blueprints for constructing a framework for community and practical ministry.

During the ministry stint at CCCH, the doctoral student entered the field of pastoral ministry in August of 2002 by accepting the call from the Centerville Missionary Baptist Church (CMBC) of Paris, KY. CMBC is a small rural church in a little Bourbon County community called Centerville. At CMBC, this pastor learned how to seek the face of God for congregational direction. Developed the ability to craft church mission and vision statements. He was then able to lead the congregation in aligning all existing and new ministries with the church’s mission and vision statements. This pastorate taught the value of building congregational momentum, unity, and spiritual growth through annual themes, sermon series, Bible Study lessons, and focused prayer meetings. The tremendous success experienced at CMBC was due in part to the lessons of transitional leadership learned from Rev. Strayhorn at CCCH. The pastoral assignment to CMBC followed the thirty plus year pastoral ministry of Rev. H. J. Banks. Banks’ successor was able to build on his predecessor’s work and transition the congregation into a more contemporary and relevant form of ministry without losing her unique sense of family, personality, and identity. CMBC blessed the doctoral candidate to develop an approach for achieving congregational growth and transformation through effective pastoral leadership.

After becoming the first full-time pastor in the history of CMBC and upon relocating to Georgetown, KY, the seminary journey began with enrollment at Lexington Theological Seminary (LTS) in August 2007. The seminarian graduated from LTS in May 2011 with a Master of Divinity degree. LTS taught the doctoral aspirant how to think theologically and how to take a biblically-sound approach to doing ministry. LTS' exposure to such a wide variety of theologies and theologians broadened his scope of ministry, sharpened his hermeneutical lenses of biblical interpretation and deepened his spiritual, technical and professional understanding of vocational ministry. He learned how to use the tool of systematic theology to address congregational issues such as the absence of African American males between the ages of twenty and forty in a church's membership. By studying religious figures and theologians like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the candidate was enlightened to the significance of integrating the philosophical disciplines of theology into a practical embodiment of theology. Most importantly matriculation through LTS developed the ability to engage in open-minded dialogue with historical and contemporary theologians and colleagues.

The Proposed Project

On Sunday, August 16, 2009, preached the inaugural sermon as the fourteenth pastor of the First African Baptist Church of Lexington, KY. While waiting to preach the first sermon as pastor-elect, the Lord revealed the mission goal of the pastoral appointment. On the front of the church bulletin in print smaller than the church's name, picture, founding date and address read the slogan "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." The assignment was to transform a church slogan into a

church reality. The fourteenth pastor's pastoral commission was to lead this historic congregation in achieving the mission of becoming "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." Working towards this end will reverse the course of an inwardly focused congregation, establish vital community relationships and build on the church's rich heritage.

Reaching FABC's missional goal will require addressing areas of weakness. Addressing areas of weakness and vulnerability can in part be defined as the work of bridging relational gaps of disconnection between the church and her neighborhood, community, and city. For the church to achieve her mission, inroads into the community must be built in some cases and rebuilt in others. Within FABC's history are examples of how today's congregation can successfully connect with her West End neighbors. The congregation's two century-year-old story is a testament to the awesomeness of God and is unique to the church's personality and identity. Her history should be more than a museum piece dusted off once a year for show-and-tell purposes. It can serve as a motivational factor for implementing relevant ministry which meets the needs of the present generation. Woven into her historic DNA is a spiritual, physical, socio-political and educational need-meeting dynamic. As such, FABC can preserve and use her history as an asset and ministry building tool. The goal of this DMin project is to develop a model of ministry that will help the storied First African Baptist Church become "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." FABC can achieve her mission and bridge the relational divide between congregation and community by embracing a congregational vision for outreach ministry. The developed ministry model will aid the church in accepting a vision for implementing initiatives designed to minister

to a neighborhood need in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End community of Lexington, KY.

The reputation Jesus developed during His earthly ministry was due in large to the compassion He had for what the gospel writer Matthew identified as the multitudes. Matthew 4:23-25 and 9:35-38 presented the multitudes as people in the community who needed physical, emotional and spiritual healing. They flocked to Jesus because they knew Jesus cared for them. They listened to Jesus because they knew He wanted what was best for them. His earthly ministry grew as a result of His compassionate teaching, preaching, and healing. Through following Jesus' biblical model of practical ministry coupled with experiential gleanings from CCCH's model of community ministry, the project implementer hypothesizes he can help FABC establish connections and rehabilitate her reputation through implementing outreach initiatives in the community.

One of Jesus' functions during His earthly ministry was the work of developing His inner circle of disciples. Their primary task was to learn from the Master so they could continue the Master's work subsequent His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Perhaps one of Jesus' most famous moments of discipleship training occurred as part of the sermonic presentation recorded in Matthew chapters five thru seven. Many refer to this sermon as "The Sermon On The Mount." One of the fascinating dynamics of that teaching segment was Jesus' ability to bring new life and meaning to Israel's rich religious tradition and teachings. He helped bring present-day understanding to yesteryear rules and regulations. In doing such, He did not diminish the value of their religious heritage, but He demonstrated its value by building on it. He enhanced its significance by instructing His audience on how to use their religious heritage as the

means for developing a more profound relationship with God and others. In the Matthew 5:1-16 portion of the sermon, He cast a vision of ministry for His disciples. Therein, He portrayed the disciples as a continuation of Israel's prophetic tradition. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus described this vision of ministry as being “salt of the earth.” By following Jesus’ Matthew 5:1-16 vision of ministry and drawing on his CMBC pastoral experience, the candidate can mobilize FABC into embracing a congregational vision for outreach ministry. Such an initiative will further aid the recasting of a more positive church image to the broader community.

Conclusion

Bridging the relational gap between congregation and community will assist FABC in becoming “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” The ministerial and educational training in conjunction with the current pastoral assignment serves as the basis for the doctoral candidate’s United Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry project. The doctoral student looks forward to researching, engaging and studying various ministry leaders, models, ideologies and methodologies targeting church and community relationship building. He anticipates engaging fellow colleagues in the process of developing the proposed model of ministry. Thus far, during the FABC pastorate, the candidate has discovered improving a church’s reputation, building inroads into the community, capitalizing on a church’s history and getting an entire congregation to embrace a vision for congregational growth is not an easy task. The process requires patience, preparation, purpose, definitive principles and a strategic plan of execution. The process calls for a model of ministry designed specifically to meet such a task. Through

the DMin project, the candidate hopes to learn how to help a religious institution in decline resurge and regain a thriving level of growth. Further aspiration is to find out how a religious entity can establish and re-establish its credibility and connectivity with its potential customer-base. Another desire is to gain knowledge as for how to help a religious organization assess itself, its history, its resources, its strengths and its weaknesses to achieve the purpose of breathing new life into the organization. There is also the goal of ascertaining the skills for leading a religious body in the development and implementation of a particularized ministry model. Finally, the researcher's prayer is that other congregations and perhaps denominational associations will benefit from the project and research.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The mission of the First African Baptist Church in Lexington, KY is to be “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” The goal of the candidate’s DMin project is to develop a model of ministry that will help the historic 225-year-old-plus congregation achieve her mission by bridging the relational gaps between the congregation and surrounding community. The developed ministry model will lead FABC into embracing a vision for a ministry of congregational outreach designed to meet neighborhood needs in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End of Lexington, KY. Serving as the fourteenth pastor of FABC, the pastoral assignment is to shepherd the FABC flock into the fulfillment of her mission.

Two scripture passages will serve as biblical foundations' texts undergirding the work of the DMin project’s ministry model. The Old Testament passage of scripture features a community with an ecological crisis. The crisis was a hindrance to community productivity. The community was a pleasant city with an unpleasant problem. To address this city-wide crisis, the men of the city turned to one of God's chosen prophets. The crisis intervention of the prophet resulted in the reversal of the community in crisis. The actions of God's representative helped solidify the community's faith in a God who cared enough to rectify their problem. Found in the biblical narrative of 2 Kings 2:19-22 is this

ecological crisis and its solution. The story features the community in crisis as the city of Jericho. The crisis of the city was a bad water supply. The corrupt water supply restricted crop production. The prophet to whom the city turned was Elisha. Elisha responded by throwing salt into the water and declaring God's miraculous decontamination of the city's water supply. The prophet's response to the problem coupled with God's healing of the water drastically improved the living conditions of Jericho. Such compassion and intervention undoubtedly impacted the community's relationship with God. Exegesis of the 2 Kings 2:19-22 narrative will unearth elements of encouragement that will empower the community outreach efforts of FABC.

The passage providing a New Testament biblical basis for a vision of congregational outreach features one of Jesus' most memorable and insightful teaching moments. A key component of Jesus' earthly ministry was the work of developing disciples, especially His inner circle called "the twelve." Their primary task was to learn from the Master so they could continue the Master's work subsequent His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Perhaps one of Jesus' most notable moments of discipleship training occurred in the Gospel of Matthew chapters 5-7. Many refer to this teaching session as "The Sermon On The Mount" (SM). In Matthew 5:1-12, the Beatitudes portion of the sermon, Jesus cast before His disciples a vision of eschatological reward coupled with an ethical mandate for ministry. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus described this vocational call to ministry as the call to be "the salt of the earth." This chapter will provide a conceptual overview of Matthew 5:1-12 as part of an exegesis of Matthew 5:13. FABC has been called upon as a congregation of disciples of Jesus Christ to be the "salt of the earth" in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End of Lexington, KY.

While there are many plausible interpretational methodologies one could employ to set forth sound biblical exegesis, the DMin aspirant will utilize the method given by Fredrick C. Tiffany and Sharon H. Ringe in *Biblical Interpretation: A Roadmap*.¹ Their five-step exegetical methodology is as follows: 1) Locating the Readers and the Reading Context; 2) Encountering the Biblical Text: Read, Feel, Question, React; 3) A Close Reading of the Biblical Text; Steps in the Process; 4) Reading Contextually: Finding the Passage in Its Place; and 5) Engaging the Text, Other Readers, and Our Communities. Locating the readers and the reading context entails bringing what Daniel Patte calls the androcentric background of the interpreter to the table of exegesis.² Every reader reads the biblical text through interpretational lenses shaped by their personal, theological, spiritual, denominational, political, cultural and congregational background and beliefs. Acknowledging such is helpful to the interpretational process. Encountering the biblical text helps the interpreter to frame their first impressions of the pericope as well as establish questions which arise from initial readings of the passage. A close reading of the biblical text leads the interpreter in identifying words, phrases or themes determining the structural flow of the text of focus. Reading a passage of scripture contextually assists the interpreter in properly understanding its literary and social context. Engaging the text, other readers, and our communities is the final stage of this method of exegesis. In this stage, the interpreter presents their exegetical interpretation and points of praxis in dialogue with others.

¹ Fredrick C. Tiffany and Sharon H. Ringe, *Biblical Interpretation: A Roadmap* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 7-8.

² Daniel Patte, *Discipleship According to the Sermon On the Mount: Four Legitimate Readings, Four Plausible Views of Discipleship, and Their Relative Values* (Valley Forge, PA: Continuum, 1996), 1.

2 Kings 2:19-22

Locating The Readers and the Reading Context

The DMin project requires the selection for exegesis an OT and an NT passage of scripture. These two passages will serve as the Biblical Foundations undergirding the DMin model of ministry. The identification of the Matthew 5:1-16 portion of Jesus' "Sermon On The Mount" as the NT pericope served as the impetus for the OT selection. In Matthew 5:1-16, Jesus cast an eschatological vision of the future. He also cast a present-day vision of ministry for His disciples. Furthermore, he portrayed discipleship as a continuation of Israel's venerated prophetic tradition. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus called His disciples "the salt of the earth." Whatever being the salt of the earth entailed, it undoubtedly involved impacting the lives of others for the sake of the kingdom. This salt-impacting dynamic directed the exegete to the OT narrative of 2 Kings 2:19-22.

The 2 Kings 2:19-22 passage is part of a broader narrative featuring the passing of the mantle of prophetic leadership from Elijah to Elisha. The text features one of the sixteen miracles performed during the administration of the prophet Elisha. The miracle performed was a divine response to a city-wide problem. The city was Jericho, and the problem was a lack of productivity created by a contaminated water supply. When approached by the men of the city in crisis, Elisha instructed them to bring him salt in a new bowl. He then proceeded to the water's source, threw in the salt and declared the water and the land healed as ordered by the word of the LORD. In the narrative, the prophet compassionately responded to a community in need. The response of Elisha transformed the living conditions of the community. As an ambassador of God, Elisha

credited God as the source of the miraculous transformation. In effect, Elisha was a salt of the earth type figure which ministered to a bad earthly situation by literally applying salt to a polluted earthly water supply. The result was a gloriously divine reversal of fortunes for a community in crisis. This story among others was recorded and preserved to strengthen faith and trust in God. Further exegesis of the passage will yield points of emphasis which a congregation can use to provide loving ministry to their local community.

Beginning the Journey at Home

Many ministry contexts of today sound like the ministry context described in 2 Kings 2:19-22. The context was a city whose situation was pleasant. However, there were multiple issues impacting the overall assessment of the city. One issue was the city's polluted water supply. The second issue was the city's inability to produce crops. Two distinct problems but the two problems were directly related. The contaminated water supply was the stimulus of the land's inability to yield agricultural sustenance. As such, a delightful place to live found itself shackled by a devastating predicament. Such is the case of the location of the DMin candidate's context of ministry, a neighborhood in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End of Lexington. The community is, for the most part, a pleasant neighborhood. Many of its residents are good, law-abiding, caring citizens. However, there are several interrelated problems plaguing the neighborhood. Many of which are the direct result of the area's low socio-economic status. Such problems have a negative impact on the hopes, aspirations, and reputation of the residents of the West End. It is into this atmosphere; the FABC family has been placed to serve. It

is from within this ministry context the doctoral candidate approaches the exegesis of 2 Kings 2:19-22.

As a product of the Black Baptist Church tradition, the candidate grew up, answered his call to ministry and currently pastors in the Black Baptist Church. The most influential theologian in his spiritual and ministerial life is a Black Baptist preacher, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Heavily influencing the writer's theological framework is the camp of liberation theology. His first full-time job in ministry was an ecumenical outreach ministry led by a Black Baptist pastor, the Reverend Willie Strayhorn. These faith formation elements and other personal dynamics condition the exercise of exegetical engagement with the 2 Kings narrative. The exegete is no stranger to community problems or the call of the church to answer the bell when such problems emerge. The prophet Elisha and the problems of the city of Jericho in 2 Kings 2:19-22 are germane to the life of FABC and her response to problems impacting life beyond the pew.

Encountering the Biblical Text: Read, Feel, Question, React

In the opening verse of the narrative, the reader is greeted by a wonderful scene. The men of the city approached the man of God with the problems of the city. How encouraging it is when men of the community care enough about the community to address the crippling conditions of their community. In many black neighborhoods, such as the one wherein FABC resides, there is a dearth of men taking the initiative to address neighborhood dilemmas. For the most part, surrounding neighborhood residents are more negative than positive images of male influence. In many community meetings and congregational gatherings, the ratio of women to men in attendance astoundingly favors

the women. Such a disparaging present day scenario prompts the question, who were these men of Jericho who dared to better the conditions of their community? Were these men different from the sons of the prophets in 2 Kings 2:15-18 who were residents of the same city? If different then why did the secular group address the issue and not the spiritual group? Is there a call or a critique of religious institutions who fail to address nagging neighborhood vexations?

The text's identification of the men of the city prompts other types of questions. Questions of diversity and disenfranchisement may come to the forefront, especially for female readers. The text features all males. What involvement and impact did women have on the unfolding of events? Maybe city mothers or concerned wives spurred the men into action? After all, a common contemporary cultural proverb is the saying "behind every good man is a good woman." Can women of the community champion restoration initiatives? Is a community left to the shambles of despair if there are no men to lead efforts of revitalization?

The locale of the narrative was the city of Jericho. Jericho debuted in the scriptures in Joshua 6. Jericho was the first city of conquest as Israel crossed the Jordan River into the land of promise. Joshua 6 records the city's conquest and destruction. The chapter ends with Joshua pronouncing a curse on the city thus discouraging a rebuilding campaign. Hundreds of years later at the cost of ignoring the curse and losing two sons because of it, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho during the reign of Ahab, king of Israel as recorded in 1 Kings 16:34. Jericho is next described here in our text as a city under the siege of a natural resource dilemma. However, a miraculous transformation occurred as Elisha proclaimed in 2 Kings 2:21 "Thus says the LORD: 'I have healed this water; from

it, there shall be no more death or barrenness.’” Were Jericho’s environmental conditions a consequence of Joshua’s curse? If so, what does such a concept say to people living in impoverished communities and barren lands? Would they possibly see themselves as cursed because of the community’s conditions or the ground’s inability to yield fruit for sustaining life? What might such a perspective have on one’s hopes, dreams, aspirations, self-esteem or motivation? What becomes the role of the church among residents living under the strains of such emotional and environmental realities?

Remembering Past and Other Experiences with the Text

The DMin candidate has limited previous exposure with the 2 Kings 2:19-22 passage and the prophetic ministry of Elisha. On one occasion, the candidate preached from the pericope as the 2001 Guest Revivalist for Pastor Bill Land and the Freeman Avenue Church of Christ located in downtown Cincinnati, OH. This particular revival and the preaching from 2 Kings 2:19-22 occurred during one of the most tumultuous and strenuous times of race relationships in the city of Cincinnati. The event which sparked such racial discord was the shooting of an unarmed, nineteen-year-old black male named Timothy Thomas by a white police officer named Stephen Roach. The shooting set off city-wide protests and rioting which led to the enforcement of a city curfew for several days. It was during this period of unrest; Pastor Land dared to have a week of revival. Because of Freeman Avenue’s location, the police presence was very heavy. Maybe for effect or other reasons, Pastor Land left the front doors of the sanctuary open during the services. The guest revivalist can vividly remember, seeing police officers on their horses patrolling past the entrance of the church and the sound of police sirens chiming in with

the singing of the choir. Into this situational context, the preacher stood and preached this text from the subject “A Pleasant City With An Unpleasant Problem.” Dr. Land’s refusal to cancel the revival taught the doctoral student several things. One, the preacher-prophet should never bow out nor bow down when his or her community is in crisis. Two, the preacher-prophet and the church should be available and assessable during times of turmoil. Three, the preacher-prophet needs to have a Word from God to help bring peaceful solutions to unpleasant problems.

A Close Reading of the Biblical Text: Steps in the Process

When researching the various translations of 2 Kings 2:19-22 narrative, one will notice some variations. For instance, most translations of verse 19 read “men of the city.” Those preferring a more gender inclusive translation such as the NRSV and the NJB read “the people of the city.” The NLT reads “the leaders of the city.” Another verse 19 variation occurs in the description of the city’s water. Many render the water as “bad,” but the NJB uses the descriptor “foul.” The use of the word “foul” evokes thoughts, ideas and emotions the word “bad” does not immediately arouse. “Foul” incites the senses soliciting their participation in the interpretive process. Perhaps the water was odiferous and offensive. Bad or foul, Jericho’s water was a useless life necessity which adversely impacted the land and its inhabitants.

The most significant translational variation of the narrative involves verse 19’s understanding of what the bad water produced. The NKJV reads “the ground barren.” The NRSV, HCSB and ESV read “the land is unfruitful.” The NIV and NLT read “the land is unproductive.” However, the NJB reads “the country suffers from miscarriages,”

and the TEV reads “and causes miscarriages.” The variation drastically alters the reading and understanding but not the primary point of the passage. Regardless of who or what was barren, unfruitful, unproductive or suffering from miscarriages, the miraculous healing of the waters totally reserved the condition. Nevertheless, noting the variations is necessary for exegetical purposes and the selection of a suitable translation. The NKJV, NRSV, HCSB, ESV, NIV and NLT view the land or ground as the object inhibited in its fertility. T. R. Hobbs acknowledges the possibility of other readings but argues for a more plausible agricultural reading of the text.³ The NJB and TEV favor a translation wherein the water causes miscarriages among the inhabitants of the land. Serving as the basis for such translations are the root of the Hebrew word for barren which means to be bereaved as a result of having lost a child or from being childless.⁴ It can also render the meaning of miscarry or to cause to miscarry. Human infertility is the predominant usage of the term, but it can also carry the meaning of being unfruitful in crop productivity. The exegete prefers the more favored agricultural reading of the text. However, an agricultural reading should not exclude the injection of the anthropological. Contaminated natural resources and lack of crop production negatively affect human livelihood. Also, adverse climatic conditions affect infant mortality rates, in particularly in areas of extreme poverty and poor socio-economic standing. An agricultural reading of the text conditioned by anthropologically-sensitivity greatly supports the fight against ecological injustices.

³ T. R. Hobbs, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 13, 2 Kings* (Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1986), 23.

⁴ G Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. Douglas W. Scott, vol. 14, *Volume XIV* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974-2006), 677-81.

One other translation variation worth noting occurs in verse 21. The difference lies in defining what happened to the waters. The NKJV, NIV, HCSB and ESV states the water was “healed.” The NRSV and NJB state the water was made “wholesome.” The NLT and TEV state the waters were “purified” or made “pure.” To say the waters were “healed” is the better rendering because the Hebrew for “heal” has the basic meaning of “restore and make whole” which includes the “purifying of undrinkable water.”⁵ It is also used to define what God does in restoring the fertility of both the earthen ground and the human womb. Such usage aid arguments for applying the infertility effects of verse 19 to both the land and or the people of the land. As such, healing of womb and ground is a divine work of God.

Due to the brevity of the narrative of choice, identifying the shape of the text is quite simple. The text possesses no subunits nor does there appear to be multiple themes or points of emphasis developed throughout the passage. The threads connecting the verses of the narrative is a city with a crisis and a prophet with a response. In verse 19, the community brings to Elisha’s attention the crisis of contaminated water and its adverse impact on the community. In verse 20, Elisha responds to the crisis. In verse 21, Elisha declares God’s deliverance of the community from the crisis. Verse 22 testifies to the lasting effects of God’s deliverance per the word of Elisha. In the broader narrative of 2 Kings 2, this miracle-story serves to validate what Richard D. Nelson perceives as the overarching theme of the chapter. Based upon 2 Kings 2:15, Nelson believes the chapter’s central theme is the transition in prophetic leadership from Elijah to Elisha.⁶ As

⁵ G Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. David E. Green, vol. 13, *Volume XIII* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974-2006), 596-99.

⁶ Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1987), 157.

such, after receiving the mantle of prophetic leadership, in 2 Kings 2:19-22 Elisha for his first miracle provided a solution to a city-wide problem.

There are a couple of passages which are similar in sorts to the 2 Kings 2:19-22 narrative. One such narrative occurs in Exodus 15:22-26. On their pilgrimage to the Promised Land after traveling three days and finding no water, Israel arrived at a place named Marah. Marah had water, but the water was bitter and undrinkable. The people complained to Moses and Moses cried to God. God showed Moses a tree which he cast into the water and the waters were made sweet. Another text of similarity appears in 2 Kings 4:38-41, which contains another miracle associated with the prophetic administration of Elisha. In that story, Elisha performed a culinary miracle for a school of prophets in Gilgal during a period of famine. At the command of Elisha, one of the prophets went out and gathered herbs and wild gourds to make a stew. Not knowing the poisonous nature of the gourds, the stew was cooked and served to the prophets. Upon noticing the virulence of the stew, they cried out to Elisha. Elisha miraculously made the stew palatable and harmless by adding flour to the pot.

Burke O. Long, points out a couple of interrelated concepts between the 2 Kings 2:19-22 text and the Exodus 15:22-26 and 2 Kings 3:38-41 texts. First of note is the occasion of a crisis or problem which lead to actions which resolved the crisis.⁷ Like Moses, Elisha did not ignore the complaint or the problem but responded to the crisis among the people. Secondly, Long notes “a more general pattern in which a problem brought to the attention of someone with power to help elicits divine intervention, which

⁷ Burke O. Long, *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature*, vol. 10, *2 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 34.

in turn results in a miracle that solves the problem . . .”⁸ What a vote of confidence for those who choose to strive to better the life and living conditions of others as ambassadors of the God who cares.

Reading Contextually: Finding the Passage in Its Place

The text of focus is part of the 2 Kings 2 narrative which highlights the transition in prophetic leadership from Elijah to Elisha. The book of 2 Kings along with 1 Kings was “originally constituted as a single literary work.”⁹ Canonically 1 and 2 Kings provide a historical account of Israel’s history beginning with Solomon’s reign over a united monarchy as King David’s chosen successor. The work then covers the reign of the kings who ruled in both the kingdoms of Judah and Israel as the monarchy split after the death of Solomon. Its coverage ends with the subsequent fall of first the kingdom of Israel and finally the kingdom of Judah into the hands of Babylon. When coupled with 1 and 2 Samuel, the combined provides a historical sketch of the reign of the kings over God’s people from Saul to Jehoiachin.

1 and 2 Kings arguably belongs under the literary genre of “historiography (history writings).”¹⁰ Although the books provide a record of a period of Israel’s history, many scholars view it as more than just history. For instance, James A. Montgomery and Choon-Leong Seow view the work of history as the presentation of a theological theme and message. Seow sees the works as a portrayal of “the inevitable interplay of divine

⁸ Burke O. Long, *The Forms of the Old Testament*, 34.

⁹ Ralph W. Klein et al., *The New Interpreter's Bible: Kings - Judith (Volume 3)* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 3-4.

¹⁰ Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1987), 12.

and human will in history. . . . In the chaotic arena of history and amid court intrigues, internecine warfare, and international conflicts, the story relentlessly conveys the confidence that God's will is being worked out."¹¹ Montgomery sees the history of the Books of Kings as "worthy of record because it was guided by the hand of God, contradicted as he was by his people."¹²

As a contribution to the theological message of the historiography of 2 Kings, our text of choice has a particular genre categorization. Long captures the school of thought of some theologians and places 2 Kings 2:19-22 under the heading of "prophet legend."¹³ This school of thought views the literary work as hagiological composed as a veneration of the prophet by the prophet's followership. Other scholars such as Thomas Holt and T. R. Hobbs prefer a more theocentric categorization. Holt places the narrative under the genre "prophetic acts of power."¹⁴ Hobbs uses the label of "power-demonstration"¹⁵ narrative. Scholars in this camp view the passage as an authentication and legitimization of the prophet's authority as a chosen representative of God. Hobbs believes narratives of this genre type were for "restoring, reinvigorating the receiving audience's confidence in the prophetic institution and God."¹⁶ Regardless of categorization, the end goal of recording the narrative was for the prophet's followers and the receivers of the narrative

¹¹ Ralph W. Klein, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 3.

¹² James A. Montgomery and Henry Snyder Gehman, *Kings I and II (International Critical Commentary)* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2001), 3.

¹³ Burke O. Long, *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature*, 34.

¹⁴ Thomas W. Overholt, 1982. "Seeing is believing: the social setting of prophetic acts of power," *Journal For The Study Of The Old Testament* no. 23 (1982): 4-5, accessed February 26, 2015, Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

¹⁵ T. R. Hobbs, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 13, 2 Kings*, 16.

¹⁶ T. R. Hobbs, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 13, 2 Kings*, 22-23.

to become more committed to their service to God and more confident in the divine will of God.

Identifying the social context of the chosen OT pericope is slightly complex. It involves identifying the initial group wherein the narrative was composed and the final audience to whom the narrative was addressed. Some scholars believe 2 Kings 2:19-22 originated as part of a collection of narratives composed by prophetic groups.¹⁷ These groups were more than likely those communities defined as the sons of the prophets. These communities of prophetic disciples existed in several areas throughout Israel. For instance, 2 Kings 2 mentions schools of prophets in Bethel and Jericho and 2 Kings 4 mentions a community of prophets in Gilgal. The 2 Kings 2:19-22 miraculous healing of the water took place in Jericho. Thus, it is quite plausible to argue for the community of prophets in Jericho as the narrative's point of origin. As stated above, the purpose of the narrative even if circulated among the schools of prophets would have been to validate Elisha as a prophet, elevate the prophetic institution and reinforce faithful commitment to God.

Although the narratives may have originated among the sons of the prophets, most believe these stories reached their final composition among and for Israel's exilic community. As such, Allan Effa states of 1 and 2 Kings, "These historical narratives are best regarded as didactic history, specifically directed to the context of judgment and dislocation experienced by the people of God."¹⁸ Nelson writes the audience was exilic

¹⁷ Burke O. Long, *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature*, 35.

¹⁸ Effa, Allan, "Prophet, kings, servants, and lepers: a missiologial reading of an ancient drama," *Missiology* 32, no. 4 (2004): 465-473, accessed February 26, 2015, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost.

Jews “whether they lived in Judah, Babylon, or Egypt.”¹⁹ Therefore according to Nelson, the narratives function as

“a cultural artifact, a societal tool with a definite purpose, function, and intention. It provides answers for the vital questions of a people. Who are we? How did we get to be who we are and where we are? What effect should our understanding of the past have on how we act and feel now?”²⁰

2 Kings 2:19-22 was a text designed to help Israel deal with a major crisis, give Israel hope in a brighter future and strengthen their resolve to trust the crisis resolving power of God.

Engaging the Text, Other Readers, and Our Communities

“My God saves”²¹ according to Walter Brueggemann is the meaning of the name Elisha. Bob Becking’s careful word study of the prophet’s name yielded the meaning “my God helps.”²² Helping the inhabitants of Jericho by saving them from their ecological nightmare is what occurred when God healed Jericho’s waters of their putrid inutile state. This inaugural event of Elisha’s ministry challenges both pastoral and congregational responses to community crises. The text calls into question ecclesiological perspectives on church involvement in addressing crippling community concerns. As churches respond to social ills, we demonstrate the compassion of a God who cares for the living conditions of all people. The ultimate result of this demonstration of divine love is the drawing of more and more people into a loving relationship with God.

¹⁹ Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 4.

²⁰ Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 12.

²¹ Walter Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Kings* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2000), 298.

²² Bob Becking, “Elisha : “Sha‘ is my God”?,” *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 106, no. 1 (1994): 113-116, accessed February 26, 2015, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost.

The main character of the text is the prophet, Elisha. The primary function of the text is to validate Elisha as the chosen successor to the prophet Elijah, thus making him a divine representative of God. After picking up the mantle of his mentor, miraculously parting and crossing back over the Jordan, Elisha wrought for his first ministry miracle the purifying of Jericho's water. The event and the prophet's overall ministry bring to light some particularities of relevancy. Among several is the call for social engagement as a function of ministry. Several scholars perceive the social nature of Elisha's work as a key characteristic of his prophetic office. For instance, Long viewed Elisha as a type of OT shaman whose ministerial role as prophet and man of God was "to diagnose and cure illness, or to reveal hidden things—past, present, and future."²³ "In short, Elisha stands between ordinary men and the world of sacred power, and taps that power for the managing of social affairs."²⁴ Overholt defined the miracle of Elisha as the work of "abrogating laws of nature"²⁵ for the purpose of turning the people's attention, beliefs and faith towards God. As such he saw Elisha's role as primarily that of "exercising social maintenance functions" for Israel.²⁶ For Rabbi Louis Ginzberg, Elisha's social involvement was specific to that of being "always ready to help the poor and the needy."²⁷ Elisha's ministry of responding to social needs is a model worthy of replication

²³ Burke O. Long, "Social setting for prophetic miracle stories," *Semeia* no. 3 (1975): 49, accessed February 26, 2015, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost.

²⁴ Burke O. Long, *Semeia*, 49.

²⁵ Thomas W. Overholt, "Seeing is believing : the social setting of prophetic acts of power," *Journal For The Study Of The Old Testament*, no. 23 (1982): 6, accessed February 26, 2015. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost.

²⁶ Thomas W. Overholt, *Journal For The Study Of The Old Testament*, 9.

²⁷ Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews - Volume 4* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909-38), 240.

by today's congregations of faith. God's modern day agents of action are called to serve communities in ways which draw them closer together, closer to God and into improved standards of living.

While Elisha is the text's center of attention, the text revolves around the crisis of Jericho's geological predicament. The text opens with the men of Jericho bringing the city's bad water and barren land issues to the prophet Elisha in hopes of a divine reversal of misfortune. A disturbing scenario immediately emerges at this point of the text for a contextual reader. The broader context of 2 Kings 2 reveals that among the residents of Jericho was a brotherhood of prophets. Why did the men of Jericho approach Elisha with the city's problem and not the sons of the prophets? Did this congregation of prophets not care about the city's water condition? Was their food supply not impaired by the same lack of crop productivity? Were they too busy with religious matters to be concerned about other real life issues? Such observations of the text challenge churches who are unmoved by the crippling conditions which move others who live in the same crippling environments. Elisha and not the sons of the prophets offer an appropriate ecclesiological response to a community crisis.

As the men of Jericho communicated to Elisha, Jericho was a pleasant city. The location of the city was in what Genesis 13:10 described as the fertile and well-watered Jordan Valley. Despite its wonderful location, the city's living conditions were impaired not by the quantity but by the quality of the city's water supply. The polluted nature of the water supply prohibited agricultural growth and may have also hampered population growth. Some believe the Joshua 6:26 curse of the city was the blame for the water's impurity. Others believe the springs of Jericho simply suffered from ecological results of

radioactive contamination. However, the text does not apprise us of how the water came to be infected. To this point, Brueggemann wrote, “Speculation on what was wrong with the water, how it came to be that way, what was the effect of the salt, etc. is not the point of the story and thus should not consume our thought and pursuit of details.”²⁸ Perhaps Brueggemann’s point should serve as a warning to all community ministry practitioners. We should be careful not to spend more time investigating the whys of a problem than we spend ascertaining solutions to the problem.

Elisha did not ask any questions; he simply instructed the men of Jericho to bring him salt in a new bowl. Then according to 2 Kings 2:21, Elisha went to the water’s source, threw in the salt and declared, “Thus says the LORD: ‘I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.’” There is divided allegiance as to whom or what should receive credit for the miraculous transformation of Jericho’s water. A. Sperber argues that the salt cured the toxicity of the water which subsequently desalinated the water thus making it potable.²⁹ Gray suggests the salt along with the new bowl was simply part of a ritual, a kind of rite of separation.³⁰ Thus God, not the salt cured the water. Regardless of what part the salt played in the water’s process of purification, God’s power in the salt or aside from the salt is whom the text credits with the healing miracle. The salt would not have had any power if it indeed was given power if it were not at the bestowal of God. However, the salt’s role is not the primary point of the text. The practical application of the text is Elisha’s response to a problem and God’s

²⁸ Walter Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Kings*, 299.

²⁹ T. R. Hobbs, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 13, 2 Kings*, 24.

³⁰ John Gray, *1 and 2 Kings: a Commentary.*, 2d, ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster John Knox Press, 1971), 478.

participation in resolving the problem through the involvement of the prophet. As stated by 2 Kings 2:22 the waters are still healed to this day in keeping with the word of Elisha the prophet of God. God, the bad water, and the barren land were present before the arrival of Elisha. God, good water, and fertile land were present upon Elisha's departure. What might God be willing to do for communities if the children of God would dare to get involved? Perhaps God and the West End of Lexington is waiting on FABC's community involvement?

In summary, 2 Kings 2:19-22 can serve as narrative supporting a call for the social engagement of a congregation in her local community. In this OT pericope, Elisha serves as a representation of the local church in her community. His actions serve as a model of ministry. Elisha began by listening to the problems of Jericho's concerned citizens. Next, he did something vitally important. He involved city residents in administering a solution. By inviting resident participation, residents became stakeholders and active supporters in the process. They even provided the resources of salt and a new bowl. Such collaboration helped build relationships in the process of solving a community issue. Ultimately, Elisha and Jericho were dependent on the power of God to change their community's condition. However, God did not act until Elisha got involved. Through responding, listening, collaborating and tapping into the power of God, FABC can impact the Georgetown Street Corridor of Lexington, KY.

Matthew 5:1-16

Locating the Readers and the Reading Context

The NT pericope of Matthew 5:1-16 serves as the primary basis upon which to construct the proposed DMin model of ministry. The key verse of focus within the passage is Matthew 5:13, wherein Jesus called His disciples “the salt of the earth.” Such a discipleship designation functioned as a missional assignment and call to action for all followers of Jesus Christ. The Beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-12 are a spiritual ethic, a set of heavenly guidelines designed to govern the salting assignment of Jesus’ disciples. Followers of Christ fulfill the task of discipleship by salting the earth in a manner prescribed by the Beatitudes. One of the ways congregations of disciples salt the earth is by demonstrating the compassion of Christ through social action. An understanding of what it means to be the salt of the earth helps to define personal definitions of discipleship as well as ecclesiological understandings of doing church.

As stated above in the Introduction section, the pastoral assignment as the fourteenth under-shepherd of FABC is to lead the church in becoming “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” The goal is to lead the congregation in being “the salt of the earth” in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End of Lexington, KY. The fourteenth pastor’s predecessor, the Rev. Dr. Leon H. McIntyre, published a book entitled *One Grain Of The Salt* in 1986. The biblical text which inspired the title of the publication was Matthew 5:13. *One Grain Of The Salt* was a book inclusive of court records, newspaper articles and other historical facts chronicling the congregation’s storied past from her 1790 origins. McIntyre’s work provided the

church with a historical account of who she was as *One Grain Of The Salt*. The current pastoral task is to help the church fulfill her ecclesiological calling as the *One Grain Of The Salt*. An exegetical study of Matthew 5:13 within the Matthew 5:1-16 context will aid such a task.

Beginning the Journey at Home

See the 2 Kings 2:19-22 “Beginning the Journey at Home” section above for details of the exegete’s background framing his hermeneutical lens of interpretation. In summary, the DMin aspirant approaches the exegesis of Matthew 5:1-16 as the pastor of First African Baptist Church which resides in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End of Lexington, KY. A variety of social challenges hampers the social mobility of many in this area of Lexington. The DMin candidate believes God is calling FABC to be “the salt of the earth” in the congregation’s neck of the woods. The goal is to impact eternal destinations while re-altering the trajectory of some of the surrounding community’s social situations such as the neighborhood’s high unemployment rate, a high concentration of crime and low student reading and math proficiency test scores.

Encountering the Biblical Text: Read, Feel, Question, React

Matthew 5:1-16 is the introductory portion of Jesus’ Matthew 5-7 Sermon On The Mount. The Gospel of Matthew portrays the didactic as having occurred during the early timeframe of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Matthew 5:2 states Jesus “opened His mouth and taught them.” An immediate question is who was the “them” Jesus taught? Matthew 5:1 offers two options. Either Jesus was teaching His disciples only or His disciples and the

multitudes. The text appears to suggest, Jesus was teaching His disciples with the multitudes in view. If this was indeed the case, what bearing on the text does Jesus teaching His disciples with the multitudes in view have on the text's interpretation and more importantly, its application? Who are the disciples and who are the multitudes? What are the connections between Jesus' teachings, His disciples, and the multitudes?

Comprising this paper's NT text of focus are the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-12 and the salt and light discipleship declarations of Matthew 5:13-16. What are the Beatitudes? Are they eschatological rewards for individuals meeting certain earthly criterion? Are they requirements for eternal entry into the heavenly realms of glory or do they represent an ideological concept constituting person-types who will be blessed by the bliss of eternity? Is the Beatitude content conceptual only or is there some element of concrete praxis qualifying the blessed? Are the Beatitudes a set of spiritual descriptors of a disciple's disposition or do they establish some called for social revolution? Is there a connection between being the salt of earth and Beatitude compliancy? Is there a connection between saltiness, discipleship and the Beatitudes? If there is, then what is the effect of the Beatitudes and a disciple's saltiness on the church's message and mission?

This biblical composition's composer has had numerous experiences with the NT text of choice. From his earliest memories of Sunday School and sermons, the text has been presented as a character-based set of teachings. Was taught one would be blessed in heaven if one exemplify these characteristics here on earth as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Being poor in spirit meant being humble. Mourning was the sadness we experience because of various losses in life. Meekness was synonymous with being poor in spirit or as the characteristic of not having a combative spirit. Hungering and thirsting after

righteousness required a drive for doing the morally right things in life. Being merciful was the work of showing compassion to the less fortunate. One's right dealings with others reflected the purity of one's heart. Peacemaking was relegated to not causing trouble and seeking peaceful resolutions to personal conflicts. Persecution was what one should expect for being a Christian in a world under the influence of Satan. Some sermons went beyond a character formation presentation and addressed life as an African-American living in a Caucasian-controlled America. Persecution was the price one must be willing to pay as a child of God standing against racial bigotry and biases. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness was couched as the struggle for justice and equality. Suffering for the right in the here and now was worth it "because payday was coming after while!"

There was consistency in the teachings and preaching centered on being the salt of the earth. Being the salt of the earth was the work of bringing flavor to the life of others. As children of God, Christians were to be different from the world. As such, they help preserve goodness in a wicked world. The doctoral student gained a deeper appreciation of the call to be the salt of the earth after starting work for an ecumenical community outreach ministry called Christ's Community In College Hill. Serving as the organization's Pastor-Administrator taught him that the salting work of a disciple was more than a conceptual calling to follow Jesus. Salt of the earth disciples was to have a tangible, transformative impact on their communities. As salt, disciples bring hope to the lives of others by being the presence of Christ in the community. As any food receives flavor from the administration of salt, so flavorful should be the influence of disciples within the social spheres of neighborhood and community.

A Close Reading of the Biblical Text: Steps in the Process

There isn't much variation among the biblical translations of the selected NT text which changes the reading or one's interpretation of the text. However, there are some variations which do and are worth noting. The NLT states "God blesses" as opposed to the traditional "Blessed are" rendition of the Beatitudes. This difference reflects the thought among some scholars which believe the state of blessedness is not eschatological only. Latin American theologian J. Severino Croatta warns against a "metahistorical—something beyond history" reading of the Beatitudes which fosters a "passive submission" to poverty, tears, marginalization, and violence.³¹ For Croatta, God blesses in the here-and-now as well as in the then-and-later. God blesses the poor, mournful and victims of injustice through those who actively engage in changing real-life circumstances and systemic oppression.

Another translational variation which might impact how one reads the Beatitudes occurs in verse 3's traditional translation of "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3) The NLT renders the phrase "poor in spirit" as "those who are poor and realize their need for God." This kind of translation supports a non-traditional, socialized interpretation of the verse. Such a reading complements and clarifies the Luke 6:20 version of the Beatitudes which reads "Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God." The NLT version of Matthew 5:3 favors the socio-economic slant of Luke 6:20 while specifying being poor itself does not guarantee entry into the kingdom of God. The poor can be wicked just like the rich. Therefore, only the

³¹ Priscilla Pope-Levison and John R. Levison, eds., *Return to Babel: Global Perspectives On the Bible* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 120.

literal poor who acknowledge their need for God experience eschatological blessedness. The NLT's translation invites a spiritually-sensitive socialized reading of the Beatitudes.

In most translations of the Matthew 5:13 focus verse, read "You are the salt of the earth." The TEV differs and reads "You are like salt for the whole human race." "The salt of the earth" phraseology of most translations portrays the earth as a spatial mission field. The TEV phraseology of "the whole human race" makes the verse more intimate and personal. The TEV also infers a qualitative difference in character and action of the salty follower of Christ and the salt-deprived human race. The rest of Matthew 5:13 contains a warning for disciples not to lose their saltiness. Most translations follow the NKJVS's "if the salt loses" or the NRSV's "if salt has lost" its flavor or saltiness wording.

Translational differences occur in describing what salt is not to lose. The NKJV and NLT warn against losing its "flavor." The NRSV, HCSB and NJB warn against losing its "taste." The NIV and TEV warn against losing its "saltiness." Regardless of how the translations describe what salt is not to lose they understand the meaning to be a loss of the salt's nature, condition, and purpose of existence. All the previously mentioned translations state salt which loses its flavor or taste becomes "good for nothing" or "no longer good for anything." Only the NLT and TEV differ by rendering the text's actual implied meaning of "It becomes worthless." Worthless, good for nothing salt is thrown out and trampled under the foot of men.

The textual structure of the Matthew 5:1-16 portion of the SM has three subunits. The first subsection of the narrative consists of verses 3-10. This subunit is an *inclusio* literary structure framed by verses 3 and 10. Both verses end with the phrase "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The *inclusio* calls for all verses within the structure to be

understood and read as a singular grouping of verses. Also, an *inclusio* typically has a central theme. Though read individually because each verse expresses a distinct thought, each verse should be read with the *inclusio* theme in mind. Another literary element distinguishing verses 3-10 from the rest of the verses lie within the narrative's use of personal pronouns. All the personal pronouns of verses 3-10 are in the third personal plural form. They read "Blessed are the . . . For theirs is," "Blessed are those . . . For they," "Blessed are the . . . For they," or "Blessed are those . . . For theirs." Beyond verse 10 personal pronoun usage changes from third person plural to second person plural in verses 11-16. They read "Blessed are you . . .," "You are the . . ." and "Let your light . . ."

Before turning to the other two subunits of the narrative, there possibly appears to be a subtheme within the subunit of the Beatitudes. Verses 3-6 differ from verses 7-10. The Beatitudes of verses 3-6 seems to describe attitudes, feelings, and emotions connected with a condition of being without which the eschaton reverses. For instance, the "poor" in spirit will inherit. Those who "mourn" will be comforted. The "meek" will inherit and those who "hunger" will be filled. Verses 7-10 carry a slightly different tone. Those verses do not necessarily portray a condition of lack but a condition of doing which garners reward in the eschaton. For instance, one cannot expect to obtain mercy without being merciful. Being pure in heart is not an abstract concept. The nature of one's actions determines the purity of one's heart. Peacemakers can only be considered such by engaging in the activity of making peace. No one is persecuted for thinking or feeling but for doing. Moreover, more often than not, persecution is levied against individuals who threaten and oppose the status quo through their actions. Observing this

subtheme of development might drastically impact one's reading and interpretation of not only the Beatitudes but the entire Matthew 5:1-16 text.

The tone, tenure, and theme of the Beatitudes flow neatly into the narrative's second subunit consisting of verses 11-12. As noted above, the shift from the first to the second subunit occurs with the change from verse 10's third-person pronoun usage to verse 11's second person pronoun usage. The narrative's fluidity is maintained by the terms "persecuted" of verse 10 and "persecute" of verse 11. In verse 10, the blessed are the ones persecuted for righteousness' sake. In verse 11, disciples are counted blessed for being persecuted for Jesus' sake. Disciples will be blessed like the persecuted of verse 10 and the persecuted prophets of Israel from verse 12. The persecuted prophets of verse 12 are among the blessed persecuted righteous of verse 10. As such the persecuted prophets of subunit two are part of subunit one's persecuted. Another point of connectivity between the two subunits is Jesus' intentional equation of His agenda to the heavenly Father's kingdom agenda. He does so by interchanging verse 10's "righteousness' sake" with "My sake" in verse 11." All who suffer for the cause of righteousness for the sake of the Father and the Son will be blessed.

The narrative's third subunit occurs in verses 13-16. The second person plural pronoun format of "You are" in verses 13-14 connects the third subunit to the narrative. The "You are" phraseology of the third subunit is a similar variation of the second subunit's "Blessed are you." Thus, establishing a connection to the "You are" audience of the third subunit as the same target audience of the "Blessed are you" of the second subunit. The persecuted disciples of verses 11-12 are declared verse 13's salt of the earth and verse 14-16's light of the world. After verse 16, one will detect a shift in the narrative.

Definitive “I say to you” type phrases supplants declarative “you are” type phrases. Thus the “you are” adage provides a connection throughout the previous subunits of 1-16, but it also distinguishes the 1-16 section from the next section of the sermon narrative.

Though much shorter in length, Luke 6:20-49 serves as the parallel text to Matthew 5-7. While Matthew 5-7 is referred to as the SM, Luke 6:20-49 is referred to as the Sermon On The Plain. As stated in Matthew 5:1, Jesus delivered the SM from a mountain. As reported in Luke 6:12, 17, Jesus delivered the SP upon coming down from a mountain. Both sermon events begin with a Beatitudes section followed by “I say to you” teachings. Both sermons end with the same exhortation to keep the sayings of Jesus. In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus likens the person who does so unto a wise builder who builds a house on a foundation of solid rock. Accompanying the similarities between the two sermons are noticeable differences. Following are some of those differences.

Matthew 5:1-16 are parallel to Luke 6:20-26. The characters of the Matthew text are similar to those of the Luke text. The characters present at the moment was Jesus, His disciples, and the multitude. In Matthew, the audience Jesus addressed with His teachings is debatable; but in Luke, the matter is not very debatable. Luke 6:17 says Jesus came down from the mountain and stood with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude. Verse 20 reads, “Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples and said.” It appears that the multitude may have indeed heard what Jesus taught, but Jesus was directing the teaching toward His disciples.

Comparatively, Matthew’s Beatitudes section of eight beatitude statements lines up nicely with Luke’s Beatitudes section of eight beatitude-woe statements. The Luke sermon contains four beatitudes followed by four “woe” declarations. In keeping with the

structure of the narrative, Luke's four "woe" statements read along with the four beatitudes. As a subunit, the beatitude-woe statements identify the ones who will be blessed and rewarded in the eschaton as opposed to those who will not. Those who will not be blessed are being blessed now by this wicked world and therefore will not be blessed by God later in the world to come. As noted in the above paragraph, Jesus lifted up His eyes toward His disciples and spoke to them with the multitudes present. Luke 6:17-19 describe the multitude as those who followed Jesus desiring to hear and be healed by Him. Perhaps the multitude served as visual aids representing the poor, hungry and persecuted who will experience the eschatological blessing of divine justice. Moreover, maybe the woe statements were a warning for the disciples not to neglect the less fortunate like the rich and full were doing. Such a perspective on the Lukan text enlightens the reading of the Matthean text.

Another noticeable difference between the Matthew and Luke text is Luke's overt socio-economic paradigm. Luke 6:20 reads, "Blessed are the poor" as opposed to Matthew 5:3's "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Luke 6:21 reads, "Blessed are you who hunger" as opposed to Matthew 5:6's "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness." Matthew appears to spiritualize the Beatitudes somewhat whereas Luke clearly socializes the Beatitudes. Luke pushes the envelope and seems to imply one's spiritual condition cannot be right if one ignores the impoverished socio-economic conditions of others. Though Matthew spiritualizes the Beatitudes, his spiritualization does not lend itself to a socially irresponsible interpretation of the Beatitudes. What Luke's Beatitudes straightforwardly states, Matthew's Beatitudes expresses and enhances. Blessed not only are those suffering hunger and want to be fed but also blessed are those

who desire liberation from the systemic shackles of economic injustices causing their hunger.

A proper perspective of Matthew's Beatitudes set the stage for exegeting the primary verse of focus which is Matthew 5:13, wherein Jesus called His disciples the salt of the earth. He further warned them not to become useless by losing their saltiness. A similar reading occurs in Luke 14:25-35. Both texts apply the salt metaphor to the mission of being a committed disciple of Jesus Christ. Both texts ask the question as to whether salt can be re-salted if it loses its saltiness. The answer in both texts is the same. The saltiness of the salt cannot be restored. Although both texts arrive at the same conclusion, they word their conclusions differently. Matthew's narrative simply states salt-less salt is "good for nothing except to be thrown out and trampled under the foot of men." Luke's narrative has more imagery than Matthew's. Luke 14:35 reads, "It is neither fit for the land nor the dunghill, but men throw it out." Luke shows the reader just how useless salt that loses its saltiness becomes. It becomes so useless that it is not even worth putting on a pile of manure. What a warning to all disciples of Jesus Christ!

Another similar reading of Matthew 5:13 appears in Mark 9:50. The Mark 9 text exists within the Mark 9:38-50 context of Jesus warning the disciples not to be stumbling blocks to fellow believers. Jesus also warned them against self-inflicted stumbling which is caused by one's own sinfulness. Disciples are to avoid being a hindrance to their personal ministries and the ministries of others. In Mark, salt is good if it maintains its salty condition for it cannot be re-salted. Mark 9:50 states the disciples are implored to "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another." The salting function of the disciple in Mark preserves and enriches relationships among fellow believers. In Mark,

the salting effect is internal to the circle of disciples. In Matthew and Luke, the effect is external to the community of disciples. The audience of Mark's salt narrative is the inner circle of the twelve. It appears Mark and Luke's salt teachings are directed specifically to disciples and not the multitudes. Such a perspective helps in discerning whom Jesus was directing His teachings toward in Matthew's SM.

Reading Contextually: Finding the Passage in Its Place

The selected NT text is a teaching narrative within the NT canon called the Gospel of Matthew. As the title implies, the book of Matthew belongs under the biblical literary genre called the gospels. As stated by M. Eugene Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew, like all NT Gospels, was composed as a literary work to interpret the *theological* meaning of a concrete *historical* event to people in a particular historical location."³² The literary works called the gospels detailed the good news of the salvific work of God as mediated through the birth, life, crucifixion and resurrection of the historical figure Jesus of Nazareth. Thus the gospels provided understanding and direction for how communities of faith were to orient their lives and gatherings as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Most scholars follow Raymond E. Brown's structural breakdown of the Gospel of Matthew.³³ Chapters 1 and 2 of the book function as an introduction highlighting Jesus' birth and infancy. Following the introduction is the body of the gospel narrative. The body consists of five sections distinguished by a narrative of events coupled with a

³² Leander E. Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible: Matthew - Mark (Volume 8)* (Valley Forge, PA: Abingdon Press, 1995), 89.

³³ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament (The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library)* (Minneapolis, MN: Yale University Press, 1997), 172.

sermonic discourse. The body layout is as follows, chapters 3-7, 8-10, 11-13, 14-18 and 19-25. Following the body is the conclusion and climax of the gospel, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus in chapters 26-28. The gospel's first sermonic discourse, Matthew 5-7 houses the text of focus which is Matthew 5:1-16. The sermonic discourse takes place at the beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus following His baptism and wilderness temptation. Its location in the gospel narrative is significant for it acts as both a description of what to expect from Jesus' ministry and what Jesus expects from disciples who will follow Him in ministry. To this point, Hans Dieter Betz sees the SM as a summarization of "what the Jesus movement regarded as the essentials for disciples to know and always bear in mind."³⁴ Jesus was a man of compassion who ministered to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the people of His day. Thus, Matthew 5:1-16 served as a teaching narrative designed to govern the activities and ministries of the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Traditionally, the authorship of Matthew was credited to Matthew the tax collector of Matthew 9:9 who was one of the inner circle of the twelve disciples as reported in Matthew 10:1-4. Though other sources and authors may have contributed to the compilation of Matthew's gospel, Betz sides with tradition and credits the evangelist as the gospel's final author.³⁵ Most contemporary scholars disagree and consider the author to be anonymous. Even for those who do not credit Matthew with authorship, credit him as having some level of influence on the composition or at least the community which produced the gospel. There is also disagreement about the gospel's

³⁴ Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon On the Mount: a Commentary On the Sermon On the Mount, Including the Sermon On the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 1.

³⁵ Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon On the Mount*, 1-4.

place of origin and target audience. As noted by Boring, “Several locations for the Matthean community have been argued: Palestine (Galilee, Caesarea, Jerusalem), Syria (Tyre or Sidon, Antioch, Egypt (Alexandria), Transjordan (Pella).³⁶ Most scholars agree with Raymond Brown and argue the locale of the gospel’s composition and the gospel’s target audience was the church in Antioch of Syria.³⁷

Most agree the gospel narrative’s production occurred between 80-100 CE. They all seem to agree Matthew penned his gospel rendition specifically for a Christian community. The gospel was as an exhortation for insiders and not an evangelistic narrative targeting outsiders. Many believe Matthew’s audience was made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Even those who disagree on authorship like Betz and Brown, agree with Charles H. Talbert concerning the social makeup of Matthew’s community. Talbert argues Matthew’s group of disciples saw themselves as a strand of Judaism attempting to live out their faith as the true children of God in allegiance to the teachings of Jesus Christ.³⁸ Following Jesus would put them at odds with their synagogues and other circles within Judaism which would be okay because Jesus was the way to achieving true covenantal faithfulness and fellowship with God and others. As such, the gospel of Matthew served as a tool of faith formation for its community of disciples. The formation of their faith would be essential to fulfilling the community’s great commission of making disciples as given in Matthew 28:18-20.

³⁶ Leander E. Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 105.

³⁷ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 212-216.

³⁸ Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon On the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5-7* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 4-6.

Engaging the Text, Other Readers, and Our Communities

Matthew 5:1-16 is part of the teachings of a sermon event which took place during the early stages of Jesus' public ministry. The event is most popularly known as the Sermon On The Mount. Matthew 5:1 states when Jesus saw the multitudes, He went up on a mountain. Once seated, His disciples came to Him. Matthew 5:2 states, it was then Jesus "opened His mouth and taught them." I contend the "them" addressed by the SM were individuals categorized as disciples. Individuals such as the Matthew 4:18-22 fishermen who had made a conscious decision and commitment to follow Jesus. Matthew 4:18-22 established the existence of a designated group called disciples who were distinct from the multitudes which also followed Jesus. Matthew 4:23-25 portrays the multitudes as individuals who followed Jesus primarily for His charisma and miracle-working capability. Though he and the exegete disagree on the sermon's target audience, Talbert rightly acknowledges the distinction in Matthew's gospel between those who followed Jesus as a result of their commitment and sacrifice as opposed to those who followed Jesus without making a commitment and sacrifice.³⁹ Daniel Patte acknowledges such a distinction by defining the multitudes as "'would-be disciples' (like the crowds who have taken a first step towards discipleship by following Jesus with the hope of receiving from him more good things, 4:24-25) . . ."⁴⁰ Matthew 5:1-2 sets the scene as Jesus going up on a mountain followed by committed disciples and not "would-be disciples." It is plausible that at some point during the discourse a portion of the multitudes, made their way up the mountainside and listened to the discourse. Matthew concludes the SM narrative in

³⁹ Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon On the Mount*, 13.

⁴⁰ Daniel Patte, *Discipleship According to the Sermon On the Mount: Four Legitimate Readings, Four Plausible Views of Discipleship, and Their Relative Values* (Valley Forge, PA: Continuum, 1996), 107.

Matthew 7:28-29 expressing the people's astonishment at Jesus' teachings. However, the teaching moment occurred with Jesus and His disciples set in a position overlooking the multitudes which consisted of individuals in need of healing, hope and hearing the good news of the kingdom. From this vantage point, Jesus began teaching, "Blessed are the poor . . ." continuing to "You are the salt of the earth . . ."

Perhaps it would be helpful to highlight Jesus' view of the multitudes in Matthew's gospel. A parallel text of Matthew 4:23-25 describing the multitudes is Matthew 9:35-38. Both texts serve as summarizations of Jesus' Galilean teaching, preaching and healing campaign. Matthew 9:36 reads, "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd." The following verses bring Chapter 9 to a close with Jesus describing the shepherd-less scene as a plenteous harvest. Chapter 10 opens with Jesus calling His twelve disciples to Himself, empowering, instructing and then sending them out as laborers into the harvest. If one uses Matthew 9:35-10:8 to sharpen their Matthew 5:1-16 lenses of interpretation, then the multitudes represent a harvest of shepherd-less sheep whose lives disciples were empowered and commissioned to impact on behalf of Jesus Christ.

Now let's turn our attention from the context of the text to the content of NT text of focus. We begin first with the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:3-10. Talbert asserts the Beatitudes are either "understood in terms of a Marxist social analysis (political language) or in terms of the formation of character (virtue ethics)."⁴¹ He and most Christian theologians from patristic church father St. Augustine to contemporary African

⁴¹ Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon On the Mount*, 47.

feminist Hannah W. Kinoti perceive the Beatitudes to be a spiritualized set of truths designed to shape the character, ethics, and morals of the disciples of Jesus Christ. St. Augustine believed one should adhere to the Beatitudes because one “will find therein, with regard to good morals, the perfect standard of the Christian life.”⁴² Against such a spiritualization of Matthew’s version of the Beatitudes, there is no argument. As presented in Matthew, the desired effect of the Beatitudes was the development of a virtuous disposition. However, the development of an inner disposition does not absolve the disciple from external actions. In fact, it demands it. If the Beatitudes are in fact designed to shape the attitude of the heart, then the desired result is the work of the hands.

To this point, Betz understands the Beatitudes to be declarative statements setting forth “a kind of theological dogma, which applies to the eschatological judgment of God.”⁴³ The Beatitudes are not entry requirements for the kingdom but a conceptual declaration of whom God will judge worthy of being blessed in the eschatological kingdom. A caveat of the eschaton is the execution of divine justice. A common concept of Jewish teaching, law and wisdom literature is the belief that the righteous and oppressed are eternally rewarded, and the wicked and oppressive are eternally punished. The meek and righteous of Psalm 37 are told not to fret for they will inherit the earth but evildoers, workers of iniquity and oppressors of the poor like the grass will be cut down and wither away. The Beatitudes reflect the eschatological work of divine judgment and justice. Betz’s theological dogma premise of the Beatitudes coincides with Boring’s assertion of the theological purpose of the gospel of Matthew. As noted above, Boring

⁴² SAINT AUGUSTINE, *Commentary On the Lord's Sermon On the Mount with Seventeen Related Sermons [the Fathers of the Church. a New Translation, No. 11]* (New York, NY: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1951), 19.

⁴³ Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon On the Mount*, 94.

contends the gospel of Matthew was a theological interpretation of the life event of the historical Jesus of Nazareth. Matthew composed the gospel for a congregation of believers designed to govern their lives as followers of Jesus Christ. From Betz's and Boring's perspectives, one can argue the Beatitudes are eschatological truths dictating the activities of earthly Christian ministry.

While most scholars support a spiritualized only reading of the Beatitudes, this exegete contends such a reading falls short of Jesus' intended goal. If the Beatitudes are indeed a set of ethics, they must then function to set forth the establishment of a certain type of ethos. The establishment of a distinct ethos must be the case because the end goal of any ethic is the promotion of a social order identifiable by particularized patterns of acceptable behaviors and desired lifestyles. Henceforth, the Beatitudes is not merely a set of spiritualized axioms. They must also be allowed to function as a call to social action. Although Betz favors a spiritualized, non-socialized reading of the Beatitudes he does say this of them, "they formulate programmatically what the community for which the SM was composed regarded as their role and task in the world . . . the addressees regard this role and task not as their own invention but as the commission issued by Jesus himself."⁴⁴

African feminist theologian Kinoti though also favoring a spiritualized reading of the Beatitudes argues one cannot compartmentalize one's spiritual disposition from one's social action. A summarization of her thought on the Beatitudes might be stated as follows. The poor in spirit mourns over the human condition with hearts of meekness hungering and thirsting so much for the alleviation of marginalization that they extend mercy and strive as peacemakers for the obliteration of systemic injustices even at the

⁴⁴ Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon On the Mount*, 155.

expense of persecution.⁴⁵ Asian feminist theologian Helen R. Graham's reflection on being a peacemaker takes a similar socio-spiritual approach to the Beatitudes.

Organizations in Graham's context of ministry worked to establish "peace zones" in the Philippines following the 1986 ouster of President Ferdinand Marcos. The residual effect of the ouster was decades of military conflict between two political parties which created an estimated 1.3 million internal refugees and major socioeconomic injustices.⁴⁶ As believed by Graham, creating zones of peace facilitated "an environment wherein efforts toward the creation of an alternative society, a society of genuine peace based on justice," could be pursued.⁴⁷

Not only do some theologians purport a spiritualized reading of the Beatitudes which is socially responsible, some OT texts like Amos 2:6-7 do as well. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3) Talbert takes the traditional view and interprets poor in spirit to mean those who possess a humble spirit. He contends Matthew is talking about being poor in disposition and not at all talking about being poor in destitution. He uses Amos 2:6-7 as an OT text to support his premise. However, Amos 2:6-7 is a pronouncement of punishment by God against Israel for their treatment of the literal poor. Talbert's humble from Amos 2:7 is not a spirit of piety but a spirit of poverty. The humble of verse 7 are the weak whose ways are perverted by the oppressive deeds of the wicked, rich and powerful. The poor in spirit of Amos 2:6-7 is not a spiritualized poor but a demoralized poor. Who would not be broken in spirit as one of the righteous in Amos 2:6 whose cause is sold out for a bag of silver? Who would not

⁴⁵ Priscilla Pope-Levison, *Return to Babel*, 126-127.

⁴⁶ Priscilla Pope-Levison, *Return to Babel*, 131.

⁴⁷ Priscilla Pope-Levison, *Return to Babel*, 133.

be poor in disposition as an Amos 2:7 father and son sex toy? Whose emotional outlook would not be impoverished as an Amos 2:7 dust-covered destitute upon whose head the unrighteous trample? The spiritual implication of Amos 2:6-7 is the social upliftment of the poor in spirit. If the unrighteous of Amos 2:6-7 will be punished for their oppressive behavior, then the converse is true for the pious in spirit which minister to the oppressed in spirit.

Another OT text setting the same kind of spiritualized call to social ministry is Psalm 37. “Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5) Psalm 37:11 reads, “But the meek shall inherit the earth. And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Psalm 37 identifies the meek with the righteous and the poor who trust the LORD. They are exhorted to wait patiently on the LORD for He will one day give them the desires of their hearts and exalt them to inherit the earth. Psalm 37’s meek are the afflicted who suffer at the hands of evildoers and the wicked. The righteous and wicked are juxtaposed throughout the psalm, particularly in regards to their social treatment of the meek, poor and needy. In verse 14, the wicked “cast down the poor and needy” but the righteous of verse 21 “show mercy and gives.” The wicked are the perpetrators of injustice who look for ways to slay the righteous who are advocates of justice.⁴⁸ From the context of Psalm 37, the righteous are representatives of the LORD who are sources of social upliftment, and they leverage their resources for the sake of social advancement. Psalm 37 is an OT conceptualization of Matthew’s version of Jesus’ Beatitudes. Furthermore, as recipients of eschatological blessings along with the meek

⁴⁸ Psalm 37:28-33.

and marginalized, the righteous of Psalm 37 are prototypes of Matthew 5:13's "salt of the earth."

A spiritualized, socially responsible reading of the Beatitudes provides the context for understanding Jesus' Matthew 5:13 call for disciples to be the "salt of the earth." Whatever being the salt of the earth entailed it would involve showing compassion and positively impacting the lives of others. Jesus extended this call to ministry to His disciples, individuals who had made a conscientious decision to be a committed follower of His teachings. Answering the call to discipleship meant accepting the Master's commission to be the salt of the earth. As "One Grain Of The Salt," FABC must be the salt of the earth if she is to truly function as "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community."

Jesus' use of the salt of the earth metaphor can infer several possible meanings. Boring states, "The saying is evocative and has multiple layers of meaning, since salt had many connotations in Matthew's tradition and context—including sacrifice (Lev. 2:13; Ezek 43:24), loyalty and covenant fidelity (Ezra 4:14, Num 18:19; eating together was called 'sharing salt' and expressed a binding relationship), purification (2 Kgs 2:19-22), seasoning (Job 6:6; Col 4:5), and preservative."⁴⁹ Don Garlington explored these and other possibilities in his studies. He sees the salting role of the disciple as both positive and significant. Drawing on his detailed research on the role and use of salt in OT texts he argues "believers as 'the salt of the earth,' rather than performing a chiefly preventive

⁴⁹ Leander E. Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 181.

function, assume an activist role of making the world better than what it was before.”⁵⁰

While there may be several possible meanings to the salt of the earth metaphor, Garlington narrows the scope to a specific point of emphasis. The overarching implication is the positive, active and transformative influence of Jesus’ disciples on society. Disciples are to make life better for others spiritually, emotionally, physically, politically, financially and socially.

Betz echoes the same sentiments in his description of the role of disciples as the salt of the earth. He does so by using the Beatitudes to define the metaphor’s locale called “earth.” For it is in the earth realm, the disciples are to perform their salting work. Betz couches his perspective as such,

“The earth is the place where the community addressed in the SM lives . . . The earth is the place where the community is on the way from . . . (see 5:5 . . .). This place is ‘among the people’ (5:13 . . .) and ‘in the world’ (5:14). It is the life between the extremes, between poverty and wealth (5:3), death and life (5:4), meekness and arrogance (5:5), justice and injustice (5:6), mercilessness and mercy (5:7), impurity and purity (5:8), war and peace (5:9), persecution and heavenly reward (5:10-12). Thus, ‘the salt of the earth’ means that the faithful disciples must get involved with this earth and its life.”⁵¹

Betz and Garlington agree Jesus’ designation of the disciples as the salt of earth was a call to action. It was a call to engage in creating a better world through their righteous presence. It was a call to cultivate communities which coincide with the principles of Christ. It was a call to serve others by making life more palatable in an earth filled with its share of imperfections and evil influences. It was a call to not only share the good news of the kingdom but to exemplify the spiritual and social mandates of the kingdom.

⁵⁰ Don B. Garlington, “The salt of the earth in covenantal perspective,” *Journal Of The Evangelical Theological Society* 54, no. 4 (2015): 715, accessed February 22, 2015, *ATLA Religion Database with ALTASerials*, EBSCOhost.

⁵¹ Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon On the Mount*, 158.

Disciples were to insert themselves into the very fabric of their communities and infuse it with the love of Jesus Christ. The declaration of being the salt of the earth was not a call to a life of passivity but one of enthusiastic engagement in the life of society.

The warning Jesus attached to the metaphor further highlighted the socially active, involved, influential import of the salt of the earth metaphor. Jesus warned His disciples not to lose their saltiness. They were not to lose their flavorful, tasteful resourcefulness as His earthly representatives. To do so would jeopardize their use to Him as disciples as well as their beneficence to others. Their uselessness would hinder the mission of kingdom building. The earthly ministry of the disciples was to mirror the earthly ministry of Jesus. His earthly campaign as the Messiah was characterized by the message He preached and the life He lived. His actions of compassion modeled the content of His message. Jesus' work of caring for people supplemented his preaching and teaching of the gospel of the kingdom. Word and work were inextricably bound. As servants of the Messianic figure, Jesus of Nazareth, disciples were charged to be like Him. Doing so meant becoming the salt of the earth.

We too, as present day disciples must embrace the same designation and live out the exhortation to be the salt of the earth. As such, congregations cannot function as houses of worshippers only. Congregations must also be houses of worshippers who work in their surrounding neighborhoods and communities. We must both verbalize and actualize the gospel by addressing social ills, community concerns, and systemic injustice. We are the salt of the earth!

Conclusion

First African Baptist Church is a church with a rich history and a bright future. One of the blessings passed down to today's congregation is the motto, "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." It is the congregation's present-day mission to transform a church motto into a church mission, mandate, and methodology for doing ministry. We believe our future as a church requires having a more visible and impactful role in the life of the West End of Lexington, KY. As such, the DMin candidate has embarked upon a project which will successfully aid the congregational endeavor. The outworking of the DMin project is the bridging of the relational divide between congregation and community. This project's proposed approach to doing such is the development of a model of ministry which will lead the church in providing relevant ministry to the surrounding community. Such outreach is the means by which FABC can establish connections to the broader community, thus promoting church growth and stronger neighborhoods.

In this Biblical Foundations section, is highlighted two texts which provide scriptural support for congregational outreach ministry. The undergirding OT text is 2 Kings 2:19-22. In the 2 Kings 2 text, the prophet Elisha responded to an adverse condition of the city of Jericho. The community crisis of Jericho was the contamination of the city's water supply. The natural resource problem negatively affected the living conditions of Jericho and the livelihood of its residents. Elisha responded to the community's plea for help by throwing salt into the water and declaring God's miraculous decontamination of the city's water supply. A central point of emphasis from the narrative is involvement and intervention. As Elisha got involved with the community

by responding to need, God intervened and solved a community problem. Healing in the community resulted in solidifying the community's faith in a God who cared for them and about them. Elisha's ministry to Jericho offers FABC a biblical precedent for connecting the church to the community through outreach.

The NT passage supporting the focus of the proposed DMin project is Matthew 5:1-16. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus called His disciples "the salt of the earth." The designation functioned as a description as well as an expectation of Christian discipleship. Jesus used the salt of the earth metaphor as a call to action, social involvement and community engagement. Jesus' preceding Beatitudes teachings of Matthew 5:3-12 shaped the disciples' understanding of their designation and call to action. Thus, being the salt of the earth meant impacting the lives of others through compassionate servitude. The earthly assignment of Jesus' ambassadors entailed not only the communication of the good news but also the visible manifestation of the good news. Followers of Christ were called upon to show mercy, become peacemakers and suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness. Such is today's call to Christian discipleship. Through active involvement in communities, congregations can transform neighborhoods and their residents. Disciples of Jesus are called upon to infuse ourselves into the fabric of society thus promoting an ethos which is equitable and flavorful for everyone. As the salt of the West End and Elisha-like figures of engagement, FABC can further the advancements of kingdom building by bridging the relational gap between the congregation and their beloved community. Not only are there biblical illustrations informing the development of a congregational vision for outreach but there are historical examples from which to pull from as well. The next chapter will highlight one of those commemorated exemplars.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Peter “Old Captain” Durrett, a slave from Virginia, founded the First African Baptist Church of Lexington, KY in 1790. Durrett established the congregation for the purpose of meeting the spiritual, social and emotional needs of slaves in Lexington and vicinity. From the congregation’s first pastor to her thirteenth pastor, the Rev. Dr. L. H. McIntyre, who led the congregation in erecting of an affordable housing complex for seniors and the disabled, FABC has in some regards successfully ministered to the needs Lexingtonians. However, over the course of time, the congregation developed a negative reputation with those beyond the four walls of the church. This reputation has helped to foster a strained relationship with those beyond the religious community resulting in a decline in congregational growth and community impact. The goal of this doctoral project is to develop a model of ministry which will help the historic congregation re-establish vibrant community relationships. The proposed ministry model will lead the FABC family in embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision designed to help the church meet resident needs in the Georgetown Street Corridor of the West End community of Lexington. Thereby, enabling the congregation to truly become be “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.”

In 1987, FABC moved from her historic downtown Lexington location to her present-day location. For the past twenty-eight years, FABC has called 465 Price Road home. This area of Lexington has undergone significant changes over the years. As of today, FABC's neighborhood is economically and educationally disadvantaged. The neighborhood is predominantly African-American with an increasing Hispanic population. In at least one class, 70% of the neighborhood's student population is performing below Kentucky's academic levels of proficiency. The West End unemployment rate is above 11% which is more than double that of Lexington's overall unemployment rate. Only 8% of neighborhood adults have completed a post-secondary education. The Georgetown Street corridor's median income is \$24,641, roughly \$1300 above Kentucky's poverty level.

In Mathew 5:13, Jesus called His disciples the salt of the earth. The earth, the community, our neighborhoods serve as the locale of the church's salting ministry. In reflecting on the Sermon On The Mount of Matthew 5-7, the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:3-12 and the salt of the earth metaphor, theologian Hans Dieter Benz expressed these thoughts,

“The earth is the place where the community addressed in the SM lives . . . This place is ‘among the people’ (5:13 . . .) and ‘in the world’ (5:14). It is the life between extremes, between poverty and wealth (5:3), death and life (5:4), meekness and arrogance (5:5), justice and injustice (5:6), mercilessness and mercy (5:7), impurity and purity (5:8), war and peace (5:9), persecution and heavenly reward (5:10-12). Thus, ‘the salt of the earth’ means that the faithful disciples must get involved with this earth and its life.”¹

¹ Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon On the Mount: a Commentary On the Sermon On the Mount, Including the Sermon On the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 158.

FABC has been called upon to be the salt of the earth in the West End community of Lexington, KY. The doctoral candidate believes the church can use her congregational history as well as the broader scope of church history to find encouragement, examples, and models of ministry which can assist in becoming present-day salters of the earth.

Beautifully and bountifully decorating the landscape of church history are salt of the earth type men, women, church leaders, laity, and movements. One such example has been selected to serve as the historical prototype undergirding the work of the DMin project of focus. Of the historical cadre of ecclesiastical exemplars, eighteenth century Christian journalist and philanthropist Robert Raikes and his Sunday School movement is the figure of focus for this chapter. In the world of Christendom, many credit Robert Raikes as the founder of the Sunday School. This native of Gloucester, England had a profound effect on his community, his country, his generation and the developments of both Christian and secular education. He is not so much the founder of Sunday Schools more so than he is the progenitor of what many refer to as the Sunday School Movement. Raikes was not the first to implement a Sunday School, but his version and purpose of the Sunday School were different from those preceding his. Furthermore, his template has outlasted others garnering the acclaim of the forerunner and game-changer of British and American Sunday School models.

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of Raikes' life, Christian service, and Sunday School initiative was the target audience for his efforts. Raikes' target audience was the unchurched and the under-served. Raikes was a layperson of the church who gave his life in service to the poor, neglected and disenfranchised of his community. J. Henry Harris, chief authoritarian and biographer of Raikes wrote, “. . . Robert

Raikes . . . was the ‘friend of the poor,’ . . . and in very truth one of those who are the ‘salt of the earth.’”²

The life, ministry and Sunday School movement of Robert Raikes within this historical composition will be covered using the following format. The chapter will begin with a section entitled *Robert Raikes, The Man*. In this section a sketch of Raikes’ family history will be provided as well as a description of his context of ministry. Both profoundly influenced his perspective on Christian duty and responsibility. Following will be a section entitled *The Ministry Before the Movement*. This section will highlight the work of Raikes as a prison reformer. Raikes’ work in the prison system of Gloucester served as the impetus for his work with Sunday Schools. The third section will be entitled *The Ministry of the Sunday School Movement*. This section will highlight the origins of the movement, the principles and structure of Raikes’ Sunday Schools, an overview of Raikes’ supporters and opposition and the impact of the movement. The historical exposition will culminate with a *Conclusion*.

Four key resources have provided the majority of the information presented in this paper. Articles and personal correspondences of Raikes will serve as the only primary source of information. J. Henry Harris’ *Robert Raikes – the Man Who Founded The Sunday School* is one of three secondary sources of contribution. Harris’ information was a conglomeration of his research coupled with data handed down to him by his father, Josiah Harris. His father collected information and conducted interviews with people who

² J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes – The Man Who Founded the Sunday School* (Ludgate Hill, London: National Sunday School Union, 1930), 125.

either knew Raikes or attended one of his schools.³ Another secondary source of contribution is Guy Kendal's *Robert Raikes: A Critical Study*. Kendal's work featured Raikes and his Sunday Schools as catalysts of England's national system of secular education. A third secondary source is Edwin Wilbur Rice's *The Sunday-School Movement, 1780-1917, and the American Sunday-School Union, 1817-1917*. Rice's work emphasized Raikes' contribution to the advancement of religious and Christian education. These sources provide insight from personal, biographical, educational and spiritual perspectives of the life and legacy of Robert Raikes and his Sunday School Movement.

Robert Raikes, The Man

Robert Raikes was born, raised and lived the entirety of his life as a resident of the city of Gloucester, England. According to Harris, the Parish Register of St. Mary de Crypt has on record the birth of Raikes as September 14, 1736, and his baptism on the 24th of the same month.⁴ Engravings etched on a memorial near his grave and engravings on a monument erected in honor of his parents state Raikes' died on April 5th, 1811 at the age of 75. As one can note, the date of Raikes' birth does not align with his age at the time of his death. *A Memoir of Mr. Robert Raikes* and more contemporary resources such as the Encyclopedia Britannica adjust the birth date in accordance with the date of death and list Raikes' birth date as September 14, 1735. Raikes was the eldest son birthed by the union of Robert and Mary Raikes. For clarity, because Raikes and his father share the same name, we will refer to his father as "Robert the elder."

³ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes: A critical study* (London, England: Nicholson and Watson, 1939), vii.

⁴ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 26.

Raikes family history is quite revealing. Both of his parents were the children of church leaders. His mother, Mary was the daughter of Rev. Richard Drew of Nailsworth. His father, Robert the elder, was the son of Timothy Raikes, Vicar of Hessle. Timothy's father Richard preceded him as Vicar of Hessle. Richard had a sister named Hester. Hester married William Wilberforce, who was the great-grandparents to the legendary philanthropist and abolitionist William Wilberforce. Richard's father who was also named Richard was a merchant by way of profession. His brother, Thomas served two terms as the Mayor of Hull. In examining Raikes' family tree, one could say whether religious, political, entrepreneurial or social, providing service to others was in his blood. Undoubtedly his life efforts were fueled by his family as well as by his faith.

Not much is known of Raikes' childhood. It is believed he received his early childhood education at St. Mary de Crypt Grammar School.⁵ At the age of fourteen, he left the Grammar School and became an apprentice to his father. His father was the owner and publisher of a newspaper called the Gloucester Journal. The Gloucester Journal was a widely successful publication and would play a major role in the life of young Raikes. Based on his research, Harris believed Raikes was privately tutored while serving as a newspaper apprentice.⁶ Although Raikes did not go on to receive a university education, he was a well-educated man who was fluent in Latin, Greek and French as well as a skilled bookkeeper. Upon the death of his father in 1757, at the age of twenty-one, Raikes became the sole "proprietor and editor of the *Gloucester Journal*."⁷ Ten

⁵ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 32-36.

⁶ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 32-36.

⁷ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 31.

years later at the age of thirty-one, he married twenty-three-year-old Anne Trigge. Their marriage yielded nine children.

Raikes was a lifelong resident of Gloucester. A description of Gloucester during the time in which he lived will give us insight into his context of ministry. Gloucester during the late eighteenth century was quite an interesting city. Harris' description of Gloucester during this era best sums up the prevailing opinions of the city. "In the eighteenth century the city of Gloucester was full of contrasts—full of churches and full of crime, with plenty of wealth and over-much of poverty; full of charities and full of suffering."⁸ From the existence of so many churches and charities emerged the proverbial expression, "As sure as God's in Gloucester."⁹ Conversely, accompanying the many churches and charities was mass poverty, an enlarged prison population, high levels of illiteracy and a great deal of immorality.

About seventy percent of Gloucester's citizenry belonged to the category of "the common people" or "the masses." The other estimated thirty percent belonged to the category of "the well-to-do" or "the titled class." The well-to-do were educated, dressed well and ate well. However, per Edwin Wilbur Rice and historians of his day, "The titled classes were spotted with moral rottenness!"¹⁰ Their language and method of communication were considered quite coarse. The morality and manners of the well-to-do of society as to be expected infiltrated the masses and had quite an adverse effect. Of the Middle Ages to which Raikes' period belonged, Mr. J. E. G. de Montgomery stated of

⁸ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 15.

⁹ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 14.

¹⁰ Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement, 1780-1917, and the American Sunday-School Union, 1817-1917* (Philadelphia, PA: American Sunday-School Union, 1917), 11.

life among the masses, “The Middle Ages . . . ‘have been painted as ignorant and picturesque. We may have our doubts as to the truth of the picture; we may well believe that the eighteenth century in the mass was more brutal, more picturesque, and less religious, and we may even believe that it was far more ignorant and less moral.’”¹¹ Guy Kendall offered four possible causes for the decline in the morals and manners of Gloucester and in particular among the poorer populace. He saw as plausible contributors the economic effects of the Industrial Revolution, some demoralizing domestic issue, neglect of the clergy and church or deficiencies in education in general.¹²

Although the Industrial Revolution had tremendous positive and negative effects on the economic and social dynamics of many cities, it had little effect on Gloucester. The manufacturing of church bells, sacks and pins were the primary enterprises before and after the boom of the Industrial Revolution. Because of its location along the Severn River, Gloucester did not see a major change in its industry of commerce during this era. The clergy could receive some of the blame for the decline in mannerisms, but not too much. Religion during this period endured a backlash. Many of the parishes did what they could to religiously educate both adults and children, but rejected in many homes were the Bible and religion. As noted by Ms. Hannah Moore, a contemporary of Raikes who started a Sunday School in the community of Cheddar, she only found one Bible in the district, and it was being used to prop up a flower pot.¹³ The introduction of the liquor gin and public houses were considered significant deterrents of social morality and

¹¹ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 2.

¹² Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 3.

¹³ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 21.

escalators of criminal activity. Many of their advertisements read, “Here you may get drunk for one penny or dead drunk for twopence.”¹⁴

Of the three factors above of societal degeneration, Kendal contended the greatest problem was the lack of education among the masses and in particularly the education of their youth. Although there was schools set up to educate the masses, they faced two major problems. For starters, many of them were improperly staffed and suffered from poor administration. Secondly, they were only able to educate children up to five or so years of age. With the absence of child labor laws and the need for the basic necessities of food and clothing, many children went to work by the age of seven. Thirdly, school hours of operation conflicted with the hours of the work day. Children of the working classes could not afford to miss work to attend school. Therefore, education did not reach the masses nor meet their needs. Within this vacuum of illiteracy, social degeneracy and spiritual immorality Raikes discovered his calling, birthed his Sunday School initiative and found great success.

The Ministry Before The Movement

As noted above, service to the public sector was a common thread connecting the generations of the Raikes family lineage. Raikes gleaned from his father much of what he utilized to initiate and advance his Sunday School agenda. His father introduced him to the newspaper publication called the Gloucester Journal. Raikes learned from his father how to use the journal as an instrument of awareness and advocacy. Robert the elder often used the pen to address and champion issues of social concern. Neither was he

¹⁴ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 8.

afraid to use the journal to expose what he considered to be hidden agendas of the government. As a matter of fact, he was summoned and punished on two occasions by the House of Parliament for information he published in the journal. Later, Raikes would follow in his father's footsteps and use journalism as a major instrument for advancing the cause of the Sunday School.

Raikes' father involved him early in the workings of social activism. This exposure provided Raikes insight into the use of social reform as a method of challenging defunct social systems and improving standards of living. For instance, one of the grave social ills of the day was the uncontrolled sale of gin and the operations of ale-houses. Father and son utilized the journal to advocate for liquor reform laws.¹⁵ Perhaps the greatest area of social interest which undoubtedly had the most influence on Raikes' life was addressing the evils of Gloucester's penal system. Just as he inherited and continued the publication of the Gloucester Journal, Raikes embraced and furthered his father's role in advocating for prison reform. Raikes was known as a prison reformer long before being hailed as a Sunday School innovator.

Raikes spent nearly thirty years working in Gloucester's system of corrections. His service to the many which filled the county jails was his ministry before the movement. Key fundamentals and principles upon which Raikes built his Sunday Schools emerged during his attempt of revolutionizing Gloucester's penal system. As a citizen, Raikes supported the existence of prisons. He viewed them as a necessary deterrent to crime. However, as a reformer, he challenged the theory of their goals, purposes, and punishments. As a citizen, he was bothered by seeing Gloucester residents and not

¹⁵ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 8.

outsiders in the prisons. As a reformer, he was gravely concerned by the great number of Gloucester's poverty-stricken who filled the jails. He was also immensely troubled by the alarmingly high rate of recidivism. Harris' assertion on the matter summarizes Raikes' contention, "We all recognize nowadays that repeated punishment without reform will, in the end, destroy moral sense."¹⁶ Raikes believed in the reformation of the prisoner. He advocated for forms of work-release, the separation of hardened criminals from perpetrators of minor offenses and the education of prisoners. In keeping with his ideology, a crowning achievement of Raikes' prison advocacy was the erection of Gloucester's House of Corrections. The central goal of the House of Corrections was to rehabilitate the prisoner morally, mentally and socially thus producing a literate, employable, respectable, contributing member of the community.

The education of the prisoner was a significant component of Raikes' concept of prison reform. His educational convictions were a central carry over to the Sunday School movement. Raikes believed "Vice is preventable. Idleness is the parent of vice. Ignorance is the cause of idleness, amongst the masses."¹⁷ Derived from his ideology was the belief he could transform society by curbing the prison population through religious and academic instruction. After twenty-five plus years of prison ministry and not yielding the results he desired he cease working with the adult prison population. However, the seeds of a movement had already been planted. Upon reaching what some would consider a point of failure, frustration, and deflation, Providence redirected Raikes' efforts. Harris highlighted this significant transition in stating,

¹⁶ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 51.

¹⁷ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 52.

“For years he attempted to deal with adult criminals, and failed; he paid the debts of small debtors, and they returned to jail; he interceded for prisoners and got their sentences commuted, only again to find them naked or chained to others in the dungeons . . . The only possible solution, as it appeared to him, was to prevent criminals being made.”¹⁸

The spiritually rich and socially transformative result of such divine redirection was the birth of a movement, the Sunday School Movement.

The Ministry of the Sunday School Movement

“What inspired the modern Sunday-school movement? How came it to be? We may reverently answer—God inspired it; social conditions and the spirit of Christianity called for it.”¹⁹ The level of poverty, illiteracy, and immorality in the city of Gloucester among the masses in the late eighteenth century presented a landscape ripe for ministry. In chapter nine of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus described those living in such an atmosphere as a plentiful harvest in need of laborers. A compassionate Raikes answered such a call to Christian labor in 1780 with the launch his first Sunday School. Equipped with the principles he developed and the experience of street life he gained while working with adult prisoners, Raikes turned his attention toward the youth population of the masses. Raikes maintained the belief of vice as preventable. However, he refined the belief concluding vice is best preventable in childhood rather than adulthood. Through his Sunday School initiative, Raikes impacted the lives of thousands of children, improved social conditions in his community and left a legacy of Christian ministry.

¹⁸ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 49.

¹⁹ Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement*, 11.

In a return correspondence to Colonel Townley of Lancaster dated November 25, 1783, Raikes gave an account of what set the wheels of the movement in motion.²⁰ One day a trip to an area of the city on business where the lowest of the masses lived arrested his attention. He noticed a wretchedly dressed group of children playing in the streets. He also took note of the crudeness of their language. His concern over what he saw led him to an enlightening dialogue with a resident of the area. She proceeded to invite him to come back on a Sunday for an even more alarming shock. For on Sundays, she stated, “. . . the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who released on that day of employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing ‘chuck,’ and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than any other place.”²¹ According to Alfred Gregory, the area of town spoken of by Raikes was one of the lowest socio-economic neighborhoods of Gloucester, known as St. Catherine’s Meadow and home of the pin factory which employed many of the children.²² After this conversation, Raikes investigated the matter further. He learned that local farmers experienced an increase in chicken poaching, vegetable stealing and damaged property on Sundays due in part to these children and others like them. Raikes’ “concern for the children of poverty who worked twelve hours a day, six days a week in the mills, mines, and sweatshops”²³ and their running of the streets without parental supervision nor regard for the Sabbath or the property of others propelled him into action.

²⁰ Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement*, 437-438.

²¹ Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement*, 437-438.

²² Alfred Gregory, *Robert Raikes, Journalist and Philanthropist: A History and Origin of Sunday Schools* (London, England: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 61.

²³ Michael J. Anthony, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 578.

Raikes' initiative began with conversations with one Rev. Thomas Stock, Vicar of St. John the Baptist in Gloucester. At the time of their conversations, Rev. Stock was the Headmaster of the local Cathedral School. In an article written by Rev. Stock dated February 2nd, 1788 he recalled the conversations between himself and Raikes. From their dialogue emerged the collaborative plan to launch a Sunday educational initiative designed to improve the deplorable state of the poorer children of Gloucester.²⁴ Their plan was to run schools on Sundays wherein the children would receive both academic and religious instruction. Stock agreed to cover one-third and Raikes two-thirds of the cost to open schools under the employed supervision of four persons.

The first school started by Raikes was in Sooty Alley of Gloucester in the home of one Mrs. Meredith. According to testimonials, some of the roughest kids in Gloucester lived in Sooty Alley. William Brick, a former student of the Sooty Alley school, stated, "Some terrible bad chaps went to school when I first went. I know the parents of one or two of them used to walk them to school with 14-pound weights tied to their legs . . . just as though they were wild jackasses, which I supposed they were, only worse."²⁵ The educational task proved too much for Mrs. Meredith to handle. Raikes was forced to close the school in Sooty Alley, but soon after he opened a new one in the home of Mrs. Mary Critchley on Southgate Street near his home. Legend has it one day a boy let a badger loose in the classroom. Fortunately, this did not deter Mrs. Critchley and her efforts. Upon finding some level of success, Raikes opened another school under the

²⁴ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 63.

²⁵ Elmer L. Towns, *A History of Religious Educators* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1975), 231.

supervision of a Mr. and Mrs. James King. Despite a rocky start and the many behavioral challenges, Raikes' Sunday School project was off and running. As reported by Harris, over the three-year period of 1780-1783 seven to eight schools were opened by Raikes, Stock and the Vicar of St. Nicholas with an average of thirty scholars in each.²⁶

The school day in Raikes' schools was pretty straightforward. The day lasted from approximately 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Following is Raikes' account of a typical school day as stated by him in a June 5th, 1785 letter to the *Arminian Magazine*,

“The children were to come soon after ten in the morning and stay till twelve; they were to go home and return at one, and after a reading lesson they were conducted to church. After church they were to be employed in repeating the catechism till half after five, and then dismissed, with an injunction to go home without making a noise, and by no means to play in the streets.”²⁷

Though not stated in the article, many believe the morning session was for educational rather than religious instruction. As stated by Raikes, the primary goal of the school day and Sunday schools, in general, was “to furnish opportunities of instruction to the children of the poorer part of the parish without interfering with the industry of the weekdays . . . to teach children and others to read, and instruct them in the knowledge of their duty as rational and accountable beings.”²⁸

Raikes employed a simple administrative structure in his schools. Each school was administrated by a master or mistress who had experience in instructing children. Qualified school administrators were required to be very literate, pleasant and respectable

²⁶ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 76.

²⁷ Alfred Gregory, *Robert Raikes*, 60.

²⁸ Elmer L. Towns, *A History of Religious Educators*, 231.

people.²⁹ Administrators were paid a schilling a Sunday plus rent for the use of space in their homes. In some cases, coal was purchased for use during hours of operation. These administrators as paid teachers were “responsible for the good behavior, cleanliness and ability of the children to read and repeat their lessons.”³⁰ As classes grew, additional staff was hired. A unique component of Raikes’ school was his use of older literate children to work with younger illiterate children. These advanced pupils or teacher assistants were called monitors. This mentorship-type principle was a carryover from his prison reform efforts wherein he used literate prisoners to help illiterate prisoners learn to read and write. Not everyone who worked with the schools was deemed paid staff. Raikes’ school utilized volunteer staff persons as well. As Raikes’ schools eventually transitioned into a more religious based focus and formal public educational initiatives and schools emerged Raikes staffed his schools entirely with volunteers.

As part of the administration of his schools, Raikes set forth requirements for the student body. Although the target audience of his service was those of the lower echelon of society, his student expectations promoted a standard of dignity and self-worth. He did not institute a formal dress code, but he did require a presentable code of dress. He also required a certain code of conduct representative of disciplined, respectful behavior. “The children were required to come with clean hands and faces, hair combed, and with such clothing as they had.”³¹ It was common place for Raikes to provide shoes for shoeless students and clothes for those whom he deemed too poorly or inadequately dressed. Student conduct was held to a high standard. Raikes was known to use corporal

²⁹ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 74.

³⁰ Elmer L. Towns, *A History of Religious Educators*, 232.

³¹ Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement*, 15.

disciplinary measures as well as a system of rewards and gifts to promote good classroom behavior. William Brick, one of Raikes' students, stated, "When a boy was really bad, he [Raikes] would take him out of school, and march him home and get his parents to 'wallop' him. He'd stop and see it done and then bring the urchin back, rubbing his eyes and other places."³² Dress and discipline were a part of the overall instructional process Raikes utilized to develop the students under his tutelage.

Raikes did not publicly begin to promote his Sunday School initiative until November 3, 1783, in a Gloucester Journal article, three years after he opened the first school. That was a glorious day for Raikes, for it was also the day his first child was born. Not until he began to see the positive results of his efforts did he begin to use his pen and the Gloucester Journal to bring public and national awareness to Gloucester's Sunday Schools and advocate for financial and community support. One of the tools Raikes used to gauge the successful impact of his Sunday Schools were the crime rates among juveniles before and after the schools were started. After the implementation of the Sunday School project, farmers reported a decrease in property damage and stolen goods on Sundays. Another indicator of success was the improved work ethic of Raikes' students. "Local factory owners, who employed many of the young men, marveled at the transformed character of those who were attending."³³ A major measuring rod of success is the number of clergy and churches beyond the city of Gloucester who embraced and implemented his Sunday School model finding great success. As reported by Raikes "Some of the clergy, in different parts of the county, bent upon attempting a reform

³² Elmer L. Towns, *A History of Religious Educators*, 231.

³³ Michael J. Anthony, *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education*, 578.

among the children of the lower class, are establishing Sunday Schools, . . . In those parishes where the plans has been adopted, we are assured that the behavior of the children is greatly civilized.”³⁴ Raikes’ results stemming from these first of many Sunday schools to come and forthcoming testimonials serve as two of the many reasons why historians, theologians and educators such as J. Henry Harris, Edwin Wilbur Rice and Kendal Guy crown Robert Raikes “the Founder of the Sunday School Movement.”

Withstanding its successes, Raikes’ Sunday School Movement had its share of opposition. Some of which were abortive threats while others almost brought the movement to a complete halt after inception. Raikes and the movement had to debunk the mistrust caused by classism, overcome social idealism, refute religious fanaticism and endure political nationalism. Procuring students was an essential component for establishing the schools. No students, no schools. Therefore, parental consent and cooperation were necessary to get students enrolled in the Sunday Schools. One of the major obstacles to student enrollment from the onset was the distrust of the masses towards the titled class. The poor were always suspicious of any program or project presented to them by those on the other end of the socio-economic ladder. They felt as though the proposed help was only another scheme designed to further their oppression. Following is an example of this mistrust as stated by Ms. Hannah More who ran into problems setting up a Sunday School in the district of Cheddar. The residents of Cheddar “thought she was trying to get hold of their children in order to sell them into West Indian Slavery . . .”³⁵ Such distrust is what Raikes and other Sunday School implementers had to

³⁴ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 74.

³⁵ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 117.

destroy for parents to send their children to their schools. Others among the poor resented religious initiatives because as far they were concerned religion did not offer them food, clothes, jobs or a way out of their poverty-stricken state.

Another challenge during the early stages of the movement was flawed social idealisms. Many among the class of the well-to-do did not believe the masses had neither the capacity to learn nor the right to be educated. Those who benefitted from the labor of the working class did not support educating them in any capacity. Factory owners and some among the ranks of nobility touted the sentiment “that if the vulgar were educated they would become supercilious, make poor servants, and want higher wages, and the higher classes would be embarrassed, if not obliterated.”³⁶ Not only did those who capitalized off an uneducated, disenfranchised segment of society have erroneous ideas but so did some of those who supported the cause. Many advocates believed educating the masses was good to a certain extent. For instance, some thought the poor should only be taught to read and taught to read strictly for religious enrichment. Others supported educating the children of the poor if it did not diminish their earning capacity, limit their resourcefulness in promoting the growth of industry or raise their expectations of upward social mobility. A couple of quotes by Sarah Trimmer, an earlier pioneer of Sunday Schools best capture such faulty perspectives. “It is not intended that the children of the poor should be instructed in branches of a liberal education, but merely in English to enable them to read the Gospels.”³⁷ She further stated “However desirable it may be to rescue the lower kinds of people from that deplorable state of ignorance . . . it cannot be

³⁶ Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement*, 20.

³⁷ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 12.

right to train them all in a way which will more probably raise their ideas above the very lowest occupations of life.”³⁸

Upon overcoming threats in early stages of the movement, Raikes had to contend with later oppositional developments. For one, he had to defend his work against the attacks of religious fanaticism. Violation of the fourth of the Ten Commandments was one of the religious darts thrust against Raikes’ movement. He and his schools received religious persecution on the basis not keeping the Sabbath day holy. Many considered the educating of children on Sundays as work and thus a Sabbath violation. To these religious objectors, Raikes replied “his object in establishing Sunday Schools was to render ‘the Lord’s Day subservient to the ends of instruction.’”³⁹ He further argued he was only doing what Christ also did on the Sabbath by improving the life and lot of his fellow companions of humanity. Some of the religious persecution suffered by Raikes was personal attacks against his proposed piety. There were those who accused Raikes of being irreligious and disingenuous in his care for the poor. Seeming to suggest his Sunday Schools were a front for generating wealth from those who provided his schools and the Gloucester Journal with financial support.

In some ways, intricately related were the two forces of religious and political opposition. During the era of Raikes’ movement, the political environment across England was quite tense. In a 1790 communication to Rev. William Lewelyn, a close confidant of Raikes, Raikes bemoaned the loneliness and rejection he was feeling in his hometown of Gloucester. Some attribute the rejection as a repercussion of the French

³⁸ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 12.

³⁹ J. Henry Harris, *Robert Raikes*, 91.

Revolution which began in 1789. Around this period the government and general populace shunned and ostracized anything which appeared to have the makings of a political or social uprising. Social movements such as Thomas Paine's political campaign which included a push for educating the poor as called for in his publication *Rights of Man* coupled with his drive to organize a National Convention in England caused a severe backlash against anyone advocating for the social progression of the poor. Unfortunately, Sunday Schools began to be categorized as anti-government, anti-Church of England havens using religion and education as tools for developing insurrectionists and revolutionists. The thought toward Sunday Schools and the efficaciousness of the movement was so prevalent that William Pitt introduced a bill in Parliament calling for the suppression of Sunday Schools.⁴⁰ Fortunately, the bill did not pass. However, the dual impact of religious resistance coupled with political hostility dealt a major blow to the movement. Although Raikes suffered the loss of detractors, finances and social support, he was able to regain footing and propel the movement forward.

Raikes could overcome obstacles to the Sunday School Movement impart due to his wide range of supporters. Several of whom were quite prominent and well respected throughout England. He enjoyed support from the homes of the poor to the pulpit of renowned preachers to the realms of royalty. One such supporter was the noted preacher and theologian John Wesley. Wesley, a colleague, and friend of Raikes was said to have on one occasion visited Raikes and toured his schools. As an endorser and promoter of Raikes' Sunday Schools, he called it "one of the noblest specimens of charity which had

⁴⁰ Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 120.

been set on foot in England.”⁴¹ Wesley further assisted the spread of the movement by allowing Raikes to post several Sunday School articles in the *Arminian Magazine*, a publication edited by Wesley. Several students of Raikes’ works suggest he greatly benefitted from his relationship with Wesley and the Methodist movement. Another supporter of the movement was the famed English politician and abolitionist William Wilberforce. On another occasion, Wilberforce and a couple of others visited Raikes and toured the school of Mrs. Critchley. They were astonished to hear the children reciting their prayers and singing hymns. Raikes support reached even to the Palace of England. On yet another occasion, he received a visit by Fanny Burney, a staff person of Queen Charlotte of Mecklenburg, wife of King George III. After Ms. Burney’s visit, Queen Charlotte invited Raikes to come and share with her more insights about his Sunday School program and his agenda of socially uplifting the poor. Raikes and the Sunday School Movement endured many obstacles but enjoyed much more success and support.

Conclusion

The doctoral composer of this historical discourse concurs with J. Henry Harris, chief authoritarian and biographer of Raikes who described Robert Raikes as a friend to the poor and one who epitomized what it means to be the salt of the earth. Robert Raikes, the journalist, and layperson of the church gave his life in service to the neglected and disenfranchised of his community. His desire to enrich the youth of the lowest in the city of Gloucester led to the implementation of Sunday Schools specifically for them. These schools were designed to minister to the children of the lower class through a

⁴¹ Michael J. Anthony, *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education*, 578.

methodology of secular education coupled with religious instruction. His Sunday School initiative grew into what many termed the Sunday School Movement. So profound was Raikes' ecclesial impact that theologian Edwin Wilbur Rice considered Raikes to be the initiator a religious education movement which forever changed the landscape of religious instruction. So insightful was Raikes' educational methodology that educator Guy Kendal considered Raikes' schools the forerunners of public education in England. For these reasons and others, Robert Raikes and the Sunday School Movement is the candidate's DMin historic foundation's model of ministry.

As noted in the introductory portion of this chapter, Raikes was not the first to implement Sundays Schools or introduce the concept of Sunday Schools. However, he is considered the Founder or Father of Sunday Schools or the Sunday School Movement for reasons which distinguished his from preceding Sunday Schools. One distinguishing trait was Raikes' target audience. The target audience of Raikes' Sunday Schools was the unchurched and underprivileged. Previous Sunday Schools primarily targeted the churched. Another differentiating characteristic of Raikes' Sunday School was its focus on secular education coupled with religious instruction. Raikes believed secular education and religious instruction were both needed to lift the veil of ignorance overshadowing the masses. However, he espoused the viewpoint of general knowledge preceding religious knowledge as the pathway to truly eradicating their ignorance thereby improving their social condition. "As Raikes put it, 'Religion must wait on improved education amongst the masses before we shall be able to make much advance . . .'"⁴² Another defining mark of Raikes' Sunday Schools is the mere fact his lasted and grew

⁴² Guy Kendall, *Robert Raikes*, 89.

into a monumental movement which impacted England and America, but the others simply did not. “By 1830, a half century after their founding, it was estimated that 1.25 million British children were being reached through the Sunday School.”⁴³ Perhaps the most defining characteristic of Raikes’ Sunday Schools was the distinctiveness of their evangelistic focus. “It was not evangelistic in the same way that contemporary ‘Child Evangelism’ classes are; no records preserve ‘decisions’ or ‘professions of faith’ such as occurred in Wesley’s or Whitefield’s preaching services. But Raikes’ school was known for its impact on the students’ morals, for the transformation of their lives . . .”⁴⁴

Robert Raikes and the Sunday School Movement serve as a model of ministry which will assist in developing the proposed DMin project. The goal of the project is to implement a model of ministry which aids the First African Baptist Church of Lexington, KY in bridging the gaps between congregation and community through congregational outreach. By addressing needs within the socio-economically challenged community wherein FABC resides, the church can perhaps improve some of the disparaging social conditions of the community. As present-day salters of the earth, the membership can learn from Raikes’ simple approach to seeing a need and moving with compassion to meet the need. As present day Elishas, FABC can impact the social dynamics of our community by bettering livelihoods in the West End of Lexington. Building upon the presented biblical and historical models of community outreach, chapter four will establish an ecclesiological argument for the necessity of a ministry vision for outreach.

⁴³ Michael J. Anthony, *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education*, 578.

⁴⁴ Elmer L. Towns, *A History of Religious Educators*, 228.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Becoming “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community” is the present-day missional objective of the historic FABC family. At the heart of any organizational mission are the actions necessary to mission accomplishment. Perhaps even more important to mission accomplishment is an organization’s understanding of it’s identity and purpose of existence as it relates to its mission. Chapter four laysout a missional argument for the work of congregational outreach predicated upon an ecclesiological and doctrinal understanding of the spiritual entity called the local church. Bridging the relational divide is a must if FABC is to fulfill her missional objective as well as her biblical mandate as a local church.

At the core of the proposed project is the challenge of enhancing FABC’s congregational praxis. Addressing the beliefs of a congregation leads to improved congregational praxis. Praxis ultimately is founded upon and driven by faith. From a praxis perspective, one can define faith as the body of beliefs which serves as the impetus of a church’s message and mission. A successful augmentation of FABC’s congregational mission to include outreach ministry to the community will need to be scripturally anchored and methodically advanced through by the church’s faith system. Such an enterprise will require revisiting, reflecting upon, reaffirming in some instances

and revising in others FABC's understanding of her identity and purpose as a local church. Critical reflection of the church's faith for the sake of directing the work of the church is but one of several activities many consider to be part of the task and function of theology. As noted by Owens C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, "Theology, at heart, is reflection on what we believe and on how it shapes our lives."¹ Moving beyond reflection with the aim of influencing commitment to the mission and vision of the church is what theologian Stanley Grenz might call stepping "into the discipline called 'theology.'"² As such, the goal of this paper is to develop the theological basis for implementing a congregational vision of outreach ministry.

"The word 'theology' . . . is formed from two other Greek terms, *theos* (God) and *logos* (word, teaching, study) . . . 'theology' means 'the teaching concerning God' or 'the study of God.'"³ Due to the enormous scope of the study of God, theological study is normally embarked upon and presented systematically according to particularized Christian categorizations.

"Traditionally these include God (theology), humankind and the created universe (anthropology), the identity of Jesus as the Christ and the salvation he brought (Christology), the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's work both in the individual and in the world (pneumatology), the church as the corporate expression of Christian faith (ecclesiology), and the consummation of God's program for creation (eschatology)."⁴

Since the purview of the candidate's projected model of ministry addresses the church, church beliefs and church praxis, the scope this Theological Foundations chapter belongs

¹ Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology*, 3rd ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 1.

² Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 1.

³ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 2.

⁴ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 3.

to “the branch of theology called ecclesiology.”⁵ A simple definition of ecclesiology is the study of the church inclusive of doctrine and mission. In the realm of theological education, ecclesiology might further be construed as “the interpretation of the nature and purpose of the church, what the church and its members are called to be and to do.”⁶

The ecclesiological exposition of this paper will follow John S. Hammett’s pyramid methodology for doing theology.⁷ The presentation will begin by establishing the theological pyramid’s ecclesiological base. The first section entitled *The Local Church as the Ekklēsia of Jesus Christ* will provide a biblically-based understanding of the local church and her mission. The next section entitled *The Apostolicity of the Local Church* will purport a more defining perspective of the local church by engaging traditional and contemporary ecclesiological assertions pertaining to the marks and mission of the church. Thirdly, building upon the work of the previous two sections will be the formalization of an argument for expanding FABC’s doctrinal viewpoint of the church as espoused by the 18 Articles of the Faith. This section will be entitled *A Doctrinal Perspective For the Local Church*. Finally, topping the pyramid will be an ecclesiological definition of congregational outreach ministry. This concluding section will be entitled *The Congregational Outreach Ministry of the Local Church*.

⁵ John S. Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2005), 15.

⁶ Thomas, *Introduction to Theology*, 257.

⁷ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 15-16.

The Local Church as the Ekklēsia of Jesus Christ

Serving as the building blocks of a biblically-based understanding of the local church are Hammett's etymology, secular functionality and scriptural usage study of the Greek term for church in the New Testament. The New Testament term for church is the Greek word *ekklēsia*. Etymologically "It is formed from two Greek words, *ek*, 'out,' and *kaleō*, 'to call.' Thus, the *ekklēsia* are 'the called out ones.' In ancient Greece, the *ekklēsia* was the assembly of the called-out citizens, who came together to conduct the business of the city."⁸ As noted by Hammett, a biblical example of the ancient Greek and secular functionality of the *ekklēsia* is found in Acts 19:32 and 39. Acts 19:21-41 features a visit of the Apostle Paul to Ephesus which resulted in a riot. Acts 19:32 identifies the gathering of the people of the city which congregated together in mob-like fashion in protest of the ministry efforts of Paul and his companions as an assembly or *ekklēsia* in the Greek. To quell the riot two recommendations were given to the illegally convened, riotous *ekklēsia*. If the ringleaders of the Pauline protest felt as if they had a legal case, they were to take their claim before the courts and proconsul. Otherwise, the issue needed to be treated as a civic affair and brought before a legally convened assembly of the city. Before this lawful *ekklēsia*, the issue could be properly addressed and settled. Thus, presented is the idea of the *ekklēsia* as a gathering of city residents who assembly under the guise of achieving a common goal or for the sake of conducting some sort of specialized service or pre-designated form of business. From the realm of the secular, an *ekklēsia* is a gathered assembly of individuals who share a common connection and

⁸ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 26.

conviction as citizens of a community. Furthermore, they assemble for the purpose of performing a particularized task.

Hammet further advanced an understanding of the New Testament perspective of *ekklēsia* by aiding his etymological and secular usage reflections with a scriptural observation. He noted how the Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint utilized the term *ekklēsia*.

“There are two primary Hebrew terms that are used to refer to God’s people in the Old Testament: *‘ēdāh* and *qāhāl*. The translators of the Septuagint used *ekklēsia* to translate *qāhāl* nearly one hundred times, but never to translate *‘ēdāh*. For *‘ēdāh* they usually used the Greek term *synagōgē*, which is used only once in the New Testament to refer to the church (James 2:2).”⁹

The usage of the terms *‘ēdāh* and *qāhāl* in the Old Testament as translated in English versions of the Bible such as the KJV, NKJV, NRSV and NIV highlights Hammett’s Septuagint observation. There appears to be a general principle as it pertains to how the terms were translated into English. The term *‘ēdāh* was primarily translated as congregation and rendered the meaning of community. Its usage was more of a cultural, ethnological, familial designation for the people of God. The term *qāhāl* was primarily translated as assembly and rendered the meaning of gathered community. Its usage was more of a spiritual, missional, covenantal designation for God’s people. As such, theologian L. Coenen noted, *qāhāl* “embraces only those who have heard the call and are following it. *‘ēdāh*, on the other hand, is the permanent community into which one is born.”¹⁰ These findings to Hammett’s point about the usage of the Greek term *ekklēsia*

⁹ Hammet, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 26-27.

¹⁰ Colin Brown, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (4 Volume Set)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 1:292-96.

for the Hebrew term *qāhāl* seem to suggest early Christians viewed themselves as assemblies of the called out who answered the call of God to be the people of God as followers of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Predicated upon the etymological, secular functionality and Septuagint usage of the Greek word *ekklēsia*, a local church understanding of the *ekklēsia* must be broader in scope than the typically asserted etymological definition of the term. As noted above, etymologically, the term simply means “the called out ones.” However, to leave the definition void of its conceptual practicality does an injustice to the term itself thus misinforming a proper understanding of what the church is as an *ekklēsia* of Jesus Christ. A simple yet comprehensive demarcation for *ekklēsia* might be to designate an *ekklēsia* as an assembly of the called out who are called upon to fulfill a purpose. The impetus for this extended rendition of the term *ekklēsia* is crucial to formulating a local congregation’s understanding of what it means to be a local church. The church as an *ekklēsia* is not merely an assembly of the called out, but it is an assembly of the called out who has been called out with a mission in mind. Being called out means being “called to.” The purpose of the called out is inextricably bound to their “called-outness.” Perhaps this is in part what theologian Emil Brunner implied by the statement, “the Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no Church . . .”¹¹

Further supporting the cognizance of the local church as a congregation or assembly of the called out who is called upon to fulfill a purpose is the predominant usage of the term *ekklēsia* in the New Testament. The term *ekklēsia* “is found in the New

¹¹ John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson, eds., *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1998), 4.

Testament 114 times. Of these, three refer to a secular assembly, and two refer to the Old Testament people of God. The remaining 109 verses refer to the New Testament church . . . The 109 occurrences of *ekklēsia* are usually seen referring to the church in two senses, local and universal.”¹² Out of the one-hundred and nine occurrences of *ekklēsia* as references to the New Testament church “. . . 13 times it is used for the universal church. 90 times it is used in reference to a local church or churches, assemblies that have a degree of order and purposefulness in their gatherings.”¹³ In efforts to alleviate confusion and to aid the comprehension of the dualistic portrayal of the New Testament church as both universal and local, many refer to the local church as the visible church and the universal church as the invisible church. As such theologian Wayne Grudem defines the invisible church as “the church as God sees it”¹⁴ and it is universally comprised of all true and genuine believers for all time.¹⁵ He defines the visible church as “the church as Christians on earth see it”¹⁶ and it is comprised of individual believers who regularly gather together in “local assemblies as congregations”¹⁷ in communities decorating the global landscape throughout the world. In alignment with Hammett’s study of *ekklēsia* in the New Testament, local churches are “actual assemblies that gather and act.”¹⁸

¹² Hammet, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 27-28.

¹³ Hammet, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 31.

¹⁴ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 855.

¹⁵ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 853, 855, 857.

¹⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 856.

¹⁷ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 29.

¹⁸ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 28.

Per Hammett's etymological, secular functionality and New Testament usage of the word *ekklēsia*, the local church is as an assembly of the called out who has been called upon to fulfill a purpose. This initial viewpoint of the local church serves as the ecclesiological base for the theological pyramid undergirding the proposed congregational outreach ministry model of this doctoral project. The next step is to further the understanding of the local church by engaging traditional and contemporary ecclesiological assertions as it pertains to the marks and mission of the local church.

The Apostolicity of the Local Church

In efforts to clarify as well as counteract erroneous ecclesiological attestations, from the fathers of the Early Church to the reformers of the Protestant Reformation to the contemporary theologians of today many have sought to define the nature and praxis of the church faithfully. They have done so primarily through creeds and statements of faith. From the A.D. 381 Council of Constantinople's Nicene Creed to Mark Dever's 2012 *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*, ecclesiastical practitioners have striven adequately to answer questions such as "what is the church?" and "what is the purpose of the church?" The Nicene Creed's patristic belief in "one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church"¹⁹ has been historically heralded as foundational to the formation of ecclesiological faith claims. As did the composers of the Nicene Creed, "Building from the wording of the Apostles' Creed, theologians of a variety of traditions have denoted the essence of the church in terms of its four marks – apostolicity, catholicity, unity, and holiness."²⁰ Considering the

¹⁹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1169.

²⁰ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 468.

Baptist faith tradition of the doctoral student's context of ministry and the hypothesized ministry model's primary intent of shaping local church praxis, the candidate would like to further the ecclesiological premises for congregational outreach ministry by focusing on the church's mark of apostolicity.

In speaking to the avoidance of ecclesiological heresy, renowned African American liberation theologian James H. Cone asserted,

“... every community that is serious about the gospel of Jesus Christ must ask, When does the Church cease to be the Church of Jesus Christ? When do the Church's actions deny the faith . . . These questions must be answered for every given situation, if the people of God are to remain relatively clearheaded about the relation between their existence as God's people and Jesus' existence as their Lord.”²¹

This quote of Cone theoretically conveys in part what is at the core of the concept of apostolicity as a mark of a true church. Ideas about the church's apostolic attribute have evolved over the course of church history. The significance of defining the church's apostolicity is germane to the goal of ensuring the church's authenticity as set forth by Jesus Christ.

The initial concept of apostolicity was grounded in the idea of apostolic succession. Apostolic succession was the patristic teaching which fostered the idea of promoting the perpetuity of the church via a historical link to the first century through bishops who could trace their ordination from one generation to the next all the way back to the originally appointed apostles of Jesus Christ.²²

“The church is apostolic in its doctrine because its teachers, the bishops, are the authorized successors of the apostles and share their function giving the church authoritative teaching. Initially, apostolic succession was claimed for the bishops

²¹ James H. Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 33-34.

²² Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 468.

in several cities, but increasingly focus was placed on the bishop of Rome, who was seen as the successor to Peter, who was appointed by Christ to be the rock on which the church is founded.”²³

From this viewpoint of apostolicity, a church is apostolic only as it can trace its appointed leadership and origins successfully to the apostles of Jesus Christ. Churches and theologians within the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican traditions adhere to this version of apostolicity as a defining trait of the church.

The theologians of the Protestant Reformation introduced the first shift in what they considered to be a rightful understanding of the apostolic nature of the church. These theologians opted for a reformed variant of apostolic succession as a way of describing the apostolicity of the church. They chose a Word and Sacrament adaptation of apostolicity. Dutch Reformed Church theologian “Hendrikus Berkhof described the Protestant position in this manner: ‘the pure preaching of the word and the right administration of the sacraments, in accordance with the Bible . . . would guarantee the bond with Christ, unobstructed by human devices.’”²⁴ Even the more radical reformers of the Reformation movement such as the Puritans and the Baptists focused on “the apostles’ teachings rather than their persons”²⁵ as the mark of apostolicity. In 1572 Puritan leader John Field “defined a church as ‘a company or congregacione of the faythfull called and gathered out of the worlde by the preachinge of the Gospell . . . framinge their lyves, governmente, orders, and ceremonies accordinge to the Worde of God.’”²⁶ Mark Dever

²³ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 60.

²⁴ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 469.

²⁵ Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2012), 19.

²⁶ Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1963), 14.

accurately accounted the traditional Baptist perspective of apostolicity and apostolic succession in stating,

“The church is apostolic and is to be apostolic because it is founded on and is faithful to the Word of God . . . From the apostles until the present day, the gospel which they preached has been handed down. There has been a succession of apostolic teaching based upon the Word of God. Paul tells the Ephesian Christians that they had been ‘built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the cornerstone’ (Eph 2:20). The succession which followed the setting of this foundation may not always have involved a person-to-person transmission, but there has been a succession of faithful teaching of the truth. Writing to the Galatians, Paul stressed that their allegiance to the gospel message he had already given them superseded any allegiance to him personally (see Gal 1:6-9).”²⁷

As an African-American Baptist pastor, the candidate embraces the Protestant notion of apostolic succession. With additional concurrence given to the traditional Baptist viewpoint of what it means for a church to be apostolic in nature. As one of its defining characteristics, an authentic church should bear the mark of apostolicity by way of its faithfulness to the teachings of Jesus Christ as handed down by His apostles in the Word of God. However, this version of apostolicity is somewhat incomplete. It only speaks to the question of “what is the church?” An adequate understanding of apostolicity must also address the question of “what is the purpose of the church?” As already established above, if the local church as an *ekklēsia* of Jesus Christ is an assembly of the called out who are called upon to fulfill a purpose, then the mark of apostolicity must include the mark of mission as well as the mark of identification. Missiologist Justice Anderson succinctly puts it this way, “God’s called out, redemptive community, the church, is to be on mission.”²⁸ What then, is the mission of the church? The most widely

²⁷ Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*, 18-19.

²⁸ John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson, eds., *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1998), 10.

accepted answer is what Christendom refers to as the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus handed down to His apostles the mission of making disciples. Apostolicity is more than being faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is also and arguably more so, the faithful adherence to the disciple-making mission of Jesus Christ. A defining apostolic connection to Jesus Christ is a commitment to the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. In agreement with this apostolic claim German theologian, Jürgen Moltmann affirmed,

“It follows from the unique character of the first Christian apostolate that the church can only appeal to the apostles when it lays hold on its own apostolic and missionary charge. In the history of God’s dealings with the world the church has a particular commission. It is to testify by means of word, deed and fellowship to the liberating lordship to the ends of the earth and to the end of time. That is the nature of its apostolate . . . In the apostolic movement it evangelizes the peoples . . . it calls men and women to repentance . . . In this apostolic movement the church must continually assure itself of its origin in the appearances of the risen Christ, and therefore of the proclamation of the apostles as well.”²⁹

The apostolic church as an authentic church must embrace the work of the Great Commission. The making of disciples begins with the initiatory steps of introducing non-disciples to Jesus Christ with the intentional goal of persuading non-disciples to become disciples. The apostolic church must continuously tend to the task of introducing people to Jesus Christ. Church praxis exempt of formal efforts strategically designed to connect people to Christ is inept and requires reassessment. The examining and retooling of praxis to remain faithful to the message and mission of Jesus Christ are what African-American liberation theologian James H. Evans, Jr. also considered to be an apostolic attribute of the church. He wrote, “This struggle to remain faithful points to the apostolic

²⁹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 359-360.

nature of the church.”³⁰ As such, the providing of an understanding of the mark of apostolicity as a defining characteristic of an authentic church further aids the local church’s understanding of who she is and what she has been called to do. The local church can only be considered a true church if it indeed bears the mark of apostolicity. A local church authenticates its apostolic connection to Jesus Christ by not only being faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ but also in fulfilling its purpose of making disciples for Jesus Christ. One might argue for an expanded concept of the local church as an *ekklēsia* of Jesus Christ to include the bearing of the mark of apostolicity. Thus, perceiving the local church as an assembly of the called out who have been called upon to fulfill the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. With this thought in mind, FABC must re-visit its doctrinal viewpoint of the local church.

A Doctrinal Perspective For the Local Church

If one were to ask a member of FABC, “what is the church?” The overwhelming majority would respond with some variation of, “the church is a local body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ.” Though correct, the response is insufficient. The basis of such an answer is the basic doctrinal statement of FABC as a local church. The reply is an abbreviation of Article XIII of the Articles of Faith. The Articles of Faith also known as the Baptist Articles of Faith or the 18 Articles of Faith are the tenants of faith FABC adheres to as a local Baptist church. The Articles of Faith are the doctrinal declarations grounding the preaching, teaching, and praxis of FABC. Based upon the already established biblically-based perspective of the church as an *ekklēsia* of Jesus Christ and

³⁰ James H. Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1993), 137.

the previously defined meaning of church apostolicity, FABC's doctrinal definition of the church needs expanding in scope. FABC's ecclesiological articulation of what the church is must be refashioned to be mission oriented and not just identity focused. Expanding the congregation's doctrinal definition of the church is necessary for further developing the theological argument for embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision for the local church.

The Articles of Faith is a revised edition of the 1833 New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith. The New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith is one of the traditionally acclaimed historical confessions of faith.³¹ The statements of faith between the two are virtually identical differing primarily in the wording at the beginning of each article. The latter reads "We believe the Scriptures teach . . ." whereas the former reads "We believe . . ." The article providing the basis for what is believed about the church is Article XIII entitled The Local Church in the Articles of Faith. It is as follows:

"We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its only scriptural officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons whose Qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles of Timothy and Titus."³²

This article only addresses the question of "what is the church?" Article XIII nor any of the other seventeen articles declare anything about the purpose of the church. Any doctrinal treatise of the church should encompass a statement about the mission of the local church.

³¹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1196-1198.

³² T. H. Boyd, *The National Baptist Hymnal* (Nashville, TN: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1977), 606.

Rendering support for such an argument is various revisions of the New Hampshire Confession of Faith adopted by other Baptist churches, associations, and conventions. For instance, the General Association of Regular Baptist specifically mentions the mission of the church in its ecclesiological statement of faith. GARBC's article pertaining to the church, Article XIV contains the sentence, "We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all people as we have opportunity."³³ The Southern Baptist Convention's Baptist Faith And Message (1925, Revised 1963, 2000)³⁴ takes a similar approach. Its ecclesiological statement presented in Article VI reads in part "A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; . . . seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. . ."³⁵ SBC goes even further in the conveyance of its ecclesiology by adding an entirely new article, Article XI entitled Evangelism and Missions, to its New Hampshire Confession of Faith revision which reads,

"It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeated commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ."³⁶

³³ "Articles of Faith | GARBC," accessed March 8, 2016, <http://www.garbc.org/about-us/beliefs-constitution/articles-of-faith/>.

³⁴ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1199-1203.

³⁵ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1200-1201.

³⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1201.

The Sunday School Publishing Board, the primary service agency of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., published a membership manual for Baptist churches composed by Ambrose Bennett. The last reprint of Ambrose's manual was 1999. While NBC USA Inc. formally endorses the Articles of Faith, the manual featured a revision entitled Our Confession Of Faith. Noting the absence of an emphasis on the Great Commission in the Articles of Faith, Ambrose's revision reads, "7. The Evangelization of the World—Baptists believe that it is the first and greatest duty of Christ's people to give the whole gospel to the whole world, without regard to race or color or creed."³⁷ Following this doctrinal statement of the church was a contemporized version of the traditional Article XIII ecclesiological tenant.

The doctoral candidate believes the enhancement of FABC's ecclesiology to include a doctrinal perspective broader than Article XIII of the Articles of Faith is significant for shaping the church's future congregational praxis. The congregants of FABC must be reprogrammed to see the church as more than just a local body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ. Dictating such a reorientation is warranted by what this paper has provided thus far about the local church as an *ekklēsia* of Jesus Christ and the apostolicity of the local church. From a more precise doctrinal viewpoint for the sake praxis reformation, FABC must expand her ecclesiological mindset of what the local church is. She must grow to view the church as a local body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ fulfilling the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. This broadened doctrinal aspect of the local church in conjunction with an understanding of the *ekklēsia*

³⁷ Ambrose Bennett, *Membership Manual for a Baptist Church* (Nashville, TN: Sunday School Publishing Board, 1999), 10.

and apostolicity sets the stage for the presentation of an ecclesiological definition for congregational outreach ministry.

The Congregational Outreach Ministry of the Local Church

Springing from the Baptist thoughts of John Leadley Dagg, this chapter will culminate the construction of the theological pyramid by presenting an ecclesiological definition for congregational outreach ministry. In the listing of what he saw as the six duties of Baptists, Dagg wrote, “It is our duty to labor faithfully and perseveringly to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth.”³⁸ The local church can fulfill this faithful duty through the labor of love called congregational outreach ministry. Forthcoming below is an ecclesiological explication of congregational outreach ministry concluding with a practical definition of congregational outreach ministry.

The suggested concept of congregational outreach ministry is grounded in Scott J. Jones’ construal of evangelism. He views evangelism “. . . as that set of loving, intentional activities governed by the goal of initiating persons into Christian discipleship . . .”³⁹ His evangelistic concept is derived from the evangelism theology of William J. Abraham.⁴⁰ Scott attaches an emphasis on love to Abraham’s definition of evangelism because everything the church does from his perspective should be grounded in Jesus’ command to love God and one’s neighbor as oneself. The central point of

³⁸ Curtis W. Freeman, et al., *Baptists Roots: A Reader in the Theology of a Christian People*, ed. C. Rosalee Velloso Da Silva and James William McClendon (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1999), 199.

³⁹ Scott J. Jones, *The Evangelistic Love of God and Neighbor: A Theology of Witness and Discipleship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 114.

⁴⁰ William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989), 95.

contention for Scott is that evangelism activities should be loving, broad and initiatory in scope. In concurrence, Frances S. Adeney in her evangelism treatise states, “. . . all these activities are an outreach, a statement of God’s love of others through us . . . Our goal as Christians is to invite people into the warmth of God’s family.”⁴¹ Connecting Adeney’s viewpoint of outreach to Scott’s construal of evangelism is the first step towards developing a definition of congregational outreach ministry.

What Scott puts forth as his definition of evangelism is what this section is intentionally categorizing as congregational outreach ministry. Preference to using the terminology of congregational outreach ministry instead of the term evangelism to express Scott’s concept of evangelism is for a couple of reasons. One reason is the prevailing mindset attached to the term evangelism and its etymological construct. “The Greek word *euangelos* from which ‘evangelism’ stems is normally translated as ‘gospel’ in English Bibles. The prefix *eu* means good and *angelos* means news, so the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ.”⁴² The verb form of *euangelos*, *euangelizesthai*, means to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.⁴³ Thus many specifically view evangelism as a task of verbal proclamation. A second reason is the Matthean Great Commission narrative. Many who reject a proclamation only version of evangelism does so because of their reading of Matthew 28:18-20. From it, evangelism is viewed as the comprehensive task of making disciples which is inclusive of proclamation and other work such as

⁴¹ Frances S. Adeney, *Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 133.

⁴² Scott J. Jones, *The Evangelistic Love of God and Neighbor*, 23.

⁴³ Scott J. Jones, *The Evangelistic Love of God and Neighbor*, 23-24.

baptism and teaching.⁴⁴ From these commonplace viewpoints, the idea of proclamation is virtually inseparably linked to the word evangelism. As such, the doctoral student chooses to use the terminology of congregational outreach ministry to capture Scott's perception of evangelism. Evangelism should not be proclamation centered. It should be initiation centered. Wherein, a strategy of initiation, needs to be robust enough to encompass both the necessary work for establishing avenues for proclamation as well as the work of proclamation. As such, the predominant verbal viewpoint connected to the concept of evangelism will be a featured component of a congregational outreach ministry definition.

Introducing people to Jesus Christ with the intent of bringing them into a loving relationship with Him is the primary objective of the ideology of congregational outreach ministry now being formalized. The way to achieving the initiatory objective is to present the gospel to the community called the world. In his reflections on the purpose of the church in relation to theological education, theologian H. Richard Niebuhr exclaimed,

“The world is the community of those before God who feel rejected by God and reject him; . . . it is the community of those who do not know God and seem not to be known by him . . . it is the community of those who knowing God do not worship him. In all cases it is the community to which the Church addresses itself with its gospel, to which it gives an account of what it has seen and heard in divine revelation, which it invites to come and see and hear. The world is the community to which Christ comes and to which he sends his disciples.”⁴⁵

Proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ is unequivocally essential to the process of making disciples. One cannot begin to enjoy the earthly nor most importantly the eternal benefits of shared fellowship with Jesus Christ apart from accepting the salvific message

⁴⁴ William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 52-53.

⁴⁵ H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry: Reflections On the Aims of Theological Education* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 26.

of the gospel. Consequently, employing strategies of proclamation are paramount to the work of congregational outreach ministry.

Though vitally important, this paper's practitioner contends the outreach ministry of a local church must extend beyond mere proclamation. Adeney's chronicling of the emergent patterns in evangelism from the first to the twenty-first century expresses as much. In summary of her overview, she acknowledged, "Both proclamation and service became important methods of evangelism in the twentieth century."⁴⁶ Today's local church can and must intimate people to Jesus Christ through the avenues of addressing needs. Twenty-first century theologian Robert D. Pierson founded his entire theology of evangelism on the same premise. He embraced the Luke 10:25-37 parable of the Good Samaritan as an evangelistic model for the local church. In his needs-based theology of evangelism, Pierson argued, "Jesus outlined one of the most effective means of leading new people to find the power of God in their lives—that is, to show them how God's love meets their needs."⁴⁷ In his ecclesiology for the African American church, Evans echoed a similar sentiment when he stated,

"The relationship between the church and the world is the essence of its *diakonia*. Diakonia refers to the external work or activity of the community of faith. It is the 'service' of the church in society. This service includes caring for the 'least of these,' for the 'widows and orphans,' the poor and destitute. The diakonia of the African American church is participation in God's liberating work on behalf of the oppressed."⁴⁸

From a missiology perspective, Justice Anderson asserted, "Jesus proclaimed God's kingdom in word and deed . . . The church of today, likewise must proclaim God's

⁴⁶ Frances S. Adeney, *Graceful Evangelism*, 40.

⁴⁷ Robert D. Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism: Becoming A Good Samaritan Church* (Nashville: TN, Abingdon Press, 2006), 9.

⁴⁸ James H. Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers*, 137.

message by word and in deed. In fact, it is often the proclamation in deeds that validates and authenticates the proclamation in words, and vice versa.”⁴⁹ Ministering to social, political, financial and physical needs is a compassionate approach to connecting people to Christ. This evangelistic methodology of ministry provides the final dynamic for the formulation of a congregational outreach ministry definition.

As an *ekklēsia* of Jesus Christ bearing the authenticating mark of apostolicity, a local church should mimic the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. As stated in Matthew 4:23 and 9:35, Jesus went about preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing the people of all kinds of diseases. The earthly ministry of Jesus Christ was strategically organized for the purpose of achieving a kingdom agenda. In following the ministry model of Christ, the local church should attempt to connect people to Jesus Christ via the dualistic means of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and by meeting needs as a display of the love and power of Jesus Christ. The local church should engage in what this segment of the chapter conceptualizes as the undertaking of congregational outreach ministry. As such, the following is an ecclesiological definition for congregational outreach ministry.

Congregational outreach ministry is the local church’s strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. This definition can serve as a practical ministry guideline for helping the local church fulfill the mandated mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ.

⁴⁹ John Mark Terry, *Missiology*, 21.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to lay the theological foundations for the doctoral candidate's ministry project. The goal of the project is to lead the historic First African Baptist Church of Lexington, KY in embracing a vision of congregational outreach ministry. The proposed model of ministry will help the church bridge the relational gap between the congregation and the surrounding community. The project hypothesizes the church can build relational inroads into the community through congregational outreach ministry. The ecclesiological developments of this section supply the theological guidelines for developing the DMin project's prospective ministry model. The primary quest is the reconfiguration of FABC's congregational praxis to include congregational outreach ministry. Doing so requires FABC to have an accurate ecclesiological understanding of the identity, the purpose and the congregational outreach ministry of a local church. The student has attempted to produce such an understanding throughout four distinct layers of development. In the first section, *The Local Church as the Ekklēsia of Jesus Christ*, advanced was a biblically-based understanding of the identity and mission of the local church. In the next section, *The Apostolicity of the Local Church*, an argument was presented for using faithfulness to Jesus' mandate to make disciples as one attribute for authenticating a true local church. The following section entitled *A Doctrinal Perspective for the Local Church* advocated for the expansion of FABC's doctrinal viewpoint of the local church. Lastly, in the section, *The Congregational Outreach Ministry of the Local Church*, an ecclesiological definition for congregational outreach ministry was established. These four sections provide the theological underpinnings for this project's model of ministry. Thus far, chapter two has provided the biblical support

for a vision of congregational outreach. Chapter three has presented a historical example of how the church can connect to the non-churched of a community by addressing neighborhood need. Here in chapter four, the necessity of a local church vision for congregational outreach to the community has been ecclesiological grounded. The fifth and final foundational chapter for the proposed model of ministry explores various methodological approaches to vision construction and model implementation.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The mission of the two-hundred-plus-year-old First African Baptist Church in Lexington, KY is to be “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” As the church’s fourteenth pastor, the primary pastoral objective is to lead the church in achieving her congregational mission. A major hurdle to achieving the church’s mission is the relational divide currently existing between FABC and Lexington’s West End community. One way to overcome such a hurdle is through providing congregational outreach ministry to the community. Thus, the primary focus of this doctor of ministry researcher is to develop a model of ministry which will lead FABC into embracing by vote a vision for congregational outreach ministry.

The researcher defines congregational outreach ministry as the execution of the local church’s strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. Congregational outreach ministry entails sharing the love of God through word and deed with the intentionality of inviting individuals into the family of Jesus Christ. Ministering to the needs of neighbors connects the local church to the broader community which opens the door to connecting the broader community to Christ and the local church.

The purpose of the Theoretical Foundations chapter is to provide an ideological basis supporting a model of ministry geared towards implementing a congregational outreach ministry vision in a local church. This exposition will examine contemporary theories and models of ministries germane to evangelism. Additionally, will be the exploration of other disciplines beyond theology which may aid the local church's ability to reach out to the community. The presentation of this theoretical composition will begin with a section entitled *Outreach Ministry In This Present Age*. The section will highlight the present-day impact of postmodernity on the church and evangelism as espoused by theologian Bryan P. Stone. The next section entitled *Outreach Ministry Models In This Present Age* will feature three specific evangelism models of ministry. The first ministry model will be one presented by church practitioners Gary McIntosh and Glen Martin. The second will be a needs-based evangelism model prescribed by United Methodist pastor Robert D. Pierson. The third will be the personal evangelism model of evangelism strategist Mark Mittelberg. The final section of this chapter will be entitled *The Anthropological Impact On Outreach Ministry In This Present Age*. This portion of the paper will highlight how the Christian anthropology of Paul G. Hiebert affects the impetus of congregational outreach ministry development in the local church.

Outreach Ministry In This Present Age

According to legendary Methodist hymnologist Charles Wesley in *In A Charge to Keep I Have*, ministry must be relevant to the times in which one lives. The second stanza of Wesley's timeless church classic reads,

“To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,

O may it all my pow'rs engage
To do my Master's will."¹

Such is the premise of theologian Bryan P. Stone's *Evangelism after Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness*. This theological treatise is a must read for any church practitioner who undertakes the work of evangelism. His contemporary theology of evangelism offers this sound ecclesiological argument.

“... the most evangelistic thing the church can do today is to be the church—to be formed imaginatively by the Holy Spirit through core practices such as worship, forgiveness, hospitality, and economic sharing into a distinctive people in the world, a new social option, the body of Christ . . . the Spirit's ‘new creation’ that is the witness to God's reign in the world and so both the source and aim of Christian evangelism.”²

For Stone, the church's greatest and most essential evangelistic asset in the twenty-first century is authentic ecclesial embodiment, “the practice of giving the world something to see—and to touch, and to try.”³ Now more than ever, if the church is going to reach society with the gospel, she must be present in the world in such a way as to authentically demonstrate socially, economically, politically and spiritually the principles and practices of Christ.

Stone's theology and practice of evangelism were specifically designed to address the role and work of the church in today's postmodern culture. Characteristics of this era include a distrust of social institutions, a disbelief in a single religious truth claim or overarching human narrative, the demarcation of the secular and the spiritual and the elevation of the autonomous self. The social ethos of the twenty-first century is one of

¹ T.B. Boyd III, *The New National Baptist Hymnal* (Nashville, TN: National Publishing Board, 1977), 190.

² Bryan P. Stone, *Evangelism After Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2007), 15.

³ Stone, *Evangelism After Christendom*, 315.

relativism, pluralism, and individualism. Religion has been pushed from the public sector to the private. The church no longer enjoys its once privileged place of prominence and societal influence. Combined with the church's past indiscretions of colonization and economic exploitation, the postmodern perspective is having an astounding negative effect on the cultural attitude towards the church. Stone believes the church's only recourse is to recover its credibility and to reaffirm its believability through an embodied witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Considering the shifting culture, competing truth claims, declining church memberships, disillusionment over religious relevancy and degenerating morality, Stone calls for a praxis of evangelism which is less about organizing and presenting what the Church believes about God and more about being present in the world in such a way that people experience God. Such a "practice of evangelism is not just one activity but a context for multiple and varied activities that are performed as part of that practice."⁴ Evangelism of this nature helps the church achieve and maintain its respectability, authenticity and social relevancy.

If evangelism is to be taken seriously by society's unchurched, then evangelism in what Stone calls today's post-Christendom culture must "challenge the racism, individualism, violence and affluence of Western culture."⁵ This point is particularly significant for the black church because of the history, identity, and legacy of the black church and its connection to the theme of liberation. As noted by African American pastor Tyrone D. Gordon,

⁴ Stone, *Evangelism After Christendom*, 23.

⁵ Stone, *Evangelism After Christendom*, 13.

In order to reach them in the black church, worship must be authentically black and socially relevant . . . the black preacher must not only address the real, deep-seated needs of the soul but must also continue to be the prophetic voice, and the church must be the prophetic agent of change in our communities. . . This relevant approach will attract those who have been disgruntled and disillusioned with the relevancy of the black church in today's world. We need churches and pastors who not only feed the flock spiritually but also challenge the societal ills with which the flock must deal on a daily basis.⁶

This type of social relevancy and prophetic critique of culture is even more so necessary if a particular black church is an urban one. Progressive National Baptist Convention President James C. Perkins argued,

The very nature of inner-city life demands a different kind of ministry . . . Poverty, poor housing, unemployment, drugs, crime and grim realities that touch the lives of people whether they live in a suburban or inner-city setting, but these and other related social problems are vastly more pronounced in urban life and require that a church focus on one or several of these issues as an outreach focus in order for that ministry to grow.⁷

These outreach perspectives of Perkins and Gordon along with the evangelism theology of Stone serve as ecclesial linchpins for developing a congregational outreach ministry vision for the local church.

Outreach Ministry Models In This Age

In *Finding Them, Keeping Them: Effective Strategies for Evangelism and Assimilation in the Local Church*, church practitioners Gary McIntosh and Glen Martin provided a thorough layout of an outreach ministry model relevant for today's times. Their model seeks to answer the question, how do churches grow? "In simple terms, there are only two ways to grow a church: we must bring people in the 'front door,' and we

⁶ Tyrone Gordon et al., *Growing the African American Church*, ed. Carlyle Fielding Stewart III (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006), 6-8.

⁷ Gordon, *Growing the African American Church*, 85-86.

must keep people from going out the ‘back door.’”⁸ Though keeping people from leaving the church is crucial to church growth, getting people in the church is essential for church growth. McIntosh and Martin offer a five-tiered evangelistic strategy designed to funnel the unchurched into the church through the efforts of Presence Evangelism, Proclamation Evangelism, Persuasion Evangelism, Progression Evangelism, and Production Evangelism. Presence Evangelism establishes the church’s presence in the community. Proclamation Evangelism helps the church present the gospel to the community. Persuasion evangelism addresses how the church helps people make decisions to follow Jesus Christ and become part of the faith community. Progression Evangelism focuses the church’s attention on the growth of new converts in the faith community. Production Evangelism addresses how the church involves new converts in the work of reaching the unchurched.

McIntosh and Martin’s Presence Evangelism, Proclamation Evangelism and Persuasion Evangelism concepts are particularly important for establishing a successful congregational outreach ministry as defined above. Presence Evangelism aids the local church in becoming a viable member of the neighborhood by answering the question, “Who are we helping?”⁹ “Churches that are effectively reaching people for Christ see the needs of the unchurched, establish ministries that allow the church to be present in the community, and have a process by which they are able to draw these unchurched people into the safety of Christ and a local church.”¹⁰ Through Presence Evangelism the local

⁸ Gary McIntosh & Glen Martin, *Finding Them, Keeping Them: Effective Strategies for Evangelism and Assimilation in the Local Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Books, 1992), 9.

⁹ McIntosh, *Finding Them, Keeping Them*, 14.

¹⁰ McIntosh, *Finding Them, Keeping Them*, 22.

church can tangibly touch lives with the love of Christ. Thus, becoming initiatory steps in the process of ushering the unchurched into a loving relationship with Christ and the fellowship of the local church. As recommended by McIntosh and Martin, these presence-establishing, need-meeting ministry initiatives should meet this criterion, “Are strictly for unchurched people; Have a nonchurch atmosphere; Are nonthreatening to unchurched people; Have at least 50 percent of the people in attendance unchurched.”¹¹

To avoid the pitfall of becoming just another social service agency, Presence Evangelism needs the supplementation of Proclamation Evangelism. Proclamation Evangelism aids the church in effectively sharing the gospel with the unchurched by answering the question, “How are we helping people hear the good news?”¹² This phase of evangelism seeks strategic ways of sharing with the unchurched the salvific message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For instance, a church can distribute VIP invitation cards to a special Bible Study series addressing the topic of depression or pass out tracks highlighting biblical principles for how to stay positive amid life’s problems at Presence Evangelism activities. Another approach might involve church-sponsored outside Sunday afternoon Christian Jazz Sets or Neighborhood Block Parties featuring personal testimonies coupled with invitations to attend local church worship services. The goal of Proclamation Evangelism is to extend as many invitations as possible to the unchurched to attend church.

The third dynamic of a balanced congregational outreach ministry vision should include the features of McIntosh and Martin’s Persuasion Evangelism strategy.

¹¹ McIntosh, *Finding Them, Keeping Them*, 28, 29.

¹² McIntosh, *Finding Them, Keeping Them*, 14.

Persuasion Evangelism helps the local church assist individuals in making a discipleship commitment to Christ by answering the question, “How are we helping people make decisions for Christ?”¹³ This phase of evangelism involves developing ways of training the individual members of the local congregation on how to share their faith with others. Such a congregational wide effort does at least two things for developing a local church’s outreach strategy. Number one, it prioritizes, centralizes and mobilizes the entire congregation in the work of evangelism and outreach. Number two, it develops a pool of parishioners for deployment in a myriad of Presence and Proclamation Evangelism activities.

If congregational outreach ministry consists of a strategic approach to initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion then features of McIntosh and Martin’s Presence, Proclamation and Persuasion Evangelism strategies offer key concepts for developing a vision of congregational outreach. Presence Evangelism addresses how to connect the local church to the surrounding community through actions of compassion. Proclamation and Persuasion Evangelism guides the local church in meeting the proclamation of the gospel requirements of a sound outreach strategy. The present age calls for models of ministry wherein the local church must visibly demonstrate the love of Christ for there to be receptiveness to the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ verbally.

The second ministry model of observation is the need-meeting evangelistic model of United Methodist pastor Robert D. Pierson. His model of ministry provides a detailed solution for constructing the actions of compassion component of a congregational

¹³ McIntosh, *Finding Them, Keeping Them*, 14.

outreach strategy. Actions of compassion are the deeds and developed programs of the local church which visibly demonstrate the love of Christ by addressing a neighborhood need. Visible demonstration of the love of Christ paves the way for the verbal presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In *Needs-Based Evangelism: Becoming A Good Samaritan Church*, Pierson contends,

Needs-based evangelism is one of the most effective and clear means of reaching new people for Jesus Christ. Churches all across America that are clearly meeting the needs of the people in the community are growing. When we combine the authentic social gospel with authentic evangelistic witness, people are led to Christ. This concept is like a two-edged sword. It must have both edges to work: real compassion, care and help, coupled with authentic witness and sharing of the gospel. It need not be obnoxious, arrogant, or manipulative. It is simply sharing the loving truth.¹⁴

For Pierson, needs-based evangelism does three crucial things which are essential to the church's ability to reach the unchurched. Meeting needs establishes the presence of God working in the community through the local church. Secondly, meeting needs authenticate the sincerity of the local church's love for the community. Thirdly, meeting needs validate the relevance of the local church in the community. Pierson's model of ministry is founded upon Jesus' public acknowledgment of His call to ministry as recorded in Luke 4:18-19 and the Parable of the Good Samaritan as taught by Jesus in Luke 10:25-37. Thus, Pierson emphatically exhorts each local church to follow the life ministry and teachings of Jesus Christ and become Good Samaritan churches.

Pierson purports what sums up to be a six-step process for becoming a needs-based evangelistic church. Step one, establish "A Simple Definition of Church."¹⁵ The

¹⁴ Robert E. Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism: Becoming A Good Samaritan Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006), 11.

¹⁵ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 25.

Parable of the Good Samaritan provided for his congregation a simple definition of church thereby laying a foundation for their congregational praxis. Simply put, “the good Samaritan first noticed—he saw somebody in trouble . . . Second, he stopped. . . Third, he helped. . . Fourth, he got personally involved. . . And fifth, he followed up.”¹⁶ Step two involves “Finding the Needs in Your Community.”¹⁷ This step entails identifying and understanding the needs of the community through “listen and learn” sessions with community residents, congregational surveys or conversations with experts of local institutions and entities within the community. Step three calls for the effective utilization of “Niche Marketing and Your Resources.”¹⁸ This step particularizes the marriage between ministry and community by leveraging a local church’s resources, interests, and strengths as a guide for effectively addressing specific neighborhood needs. Step four couples the meeting of “Needs and Inviting.”¹⁹ Because meeting needs are not the end goal of needs-based evangelism, through this step the church strategically, unapologetically and lovingly incorporates means of inviting persons to become a follower of Christ and or to attend worship services through their need meeting activities. Step five reinforces needs-based evangelism precepts and principles while actively keeping the church engaged in needs-based evangelism initiatives by “Celebrating Being the Good Samaritan Church.”²⁰ This step reinforces needs-based evangelism precepts and principles through pulpit recognitions, sermon presentations, bulletin inserts and

¹⁶ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 25-26.

¹⁷ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 26.

¹⁸ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 27.

¹⁹ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 29.

²⁰ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 30.

congregational testimonials. Step six, “Experiment.”²¹ As best stated by Pierson, “A good Samaritan congregation needs to be willing to experiment, evaluate, and make corrections and changes.”²² Pierson’s needs-based evangelism model features useful techniques for configuring a church’s actions of compassion approach to doing congregational outreach ministry.

A third ministry model assisting the advancement of a local church ministry vision for congregational outreach to the community is the evangelistic model of evangelism strategist Mark Mittelberg. In *Becoming A Contagious Church: Increasing Your Church’s Evangelistic Temperature*, Mittelberg takes his learnings as the first evangelism director of the famed Willow Creek Community Church coupled with experiences with other churches and presents a biblically-based step-by-step plan for equipping and mobilizing an entire congregation in the work of proclamation evangelism. Becoming what he calls, “a more outwardly focused and evangelistically fruitful church. In other words, *a contagious church*.”²³ Mittelberg’s strategic approach to evangelism is designed to help a local church in two ways. One is to train the entire congregation in personal evangelism which entails helping each member learn how naturally to share their faith with others. Second is to structurally staff and organize an evangelism team within the local church thereby making evangelism a contiguous component of the life of the local church.

²¹ Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 30.

²² Pierson, *Needs-Based Evangelism*, 30.

²³ Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church: Increasing Your Church’s Evangelistic Temperature*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 11.

Mittelberg proposes a six-stage process to becoming a contagious church. “Stage 1: Live An Evangelistic Life.”²⁴ According to 1 Timothy 4:12, the first step in becoming a contagious church is for the pastor and church leaders to embody and exemplify evangelistic values and principles before the congregation. Laity must see leadership being authentically warm, inviting and welcoming to outsiders. The congregation cannot go where church leaders do not lead and church leaders like Jesus Himself must lead by example. “Stage 2: Instill Evangelistic Values In The People Around You.”²⁵ Based upon 2 Timothy 1:13; 2:2, the second step towards becoming a contagious church is for the pastor to lead the entire congregation in embracing the mission of evangelism. Through vision casting, leadership training, sermon series, Bible Study lessons, and prayer meetings a pastor can methodically instill within the congregation from leadership to the laity the Great Commission mandate of evangelism. Encouraging quarterly small group studies of evangelism books like *Out of the Saltshaker and Into the World* or facilitating evangelism classes for each congregational ministry using the *Becoming a Contagious Christian* curriculum are ways of incorporating evangelism into the life of the local church. There are two unique features of Mittelberg’s stage two process which warrants special mention.

First, his model acknowledges the necessity of money to the work of effective outreach ministry. As such, he calls for the incorporation of financial investments both individually and congregationally as a necessary stage two component for measuring the church’s outreach commitment. Acclaimed marketing expert George Barna states

²⁴ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 29.

²⁵ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 47.

the average church spends less than 2 percent of total revenues on local evangelism . . . But in comparison . . . “among the *leading* evangelistic churches, we found that it was more common to spend 10 to 20 percent of the annual budget for that purpose . . . In general, the churches that are most serious about evangelism seem to put their money where their mission is.”²⁶

Secondly, his stage two model of ministry advocates the teaching of denominational and or congregational history as an effective means of instilling evangelistic values in the local church. For congregations with rich church legacies like that of First African Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, this is a great way of ingratiating the congregation to the work of congregational outreach ministry by leveraging its local church history.

“Stage 3: Empower An Evangelism Leader.”²⁷ As guided by Ephesians 4:11-12, the third step in becoming a contagious church is to create, fulfill and empower a congregational leader of evangelism. The personnel’s primary task is to provide leadership in implementing a local church strategy for organizing, training and mobilizing the membership in evangelism. “Stage 4: Train The Church In Evangelism Skills—The 100 Percent.”²⁸ In alignment with the Luke 6:40 training concept, the fourth step to becoming a contagious church is to continually seek out ways to get one hundred percent of the church trained in learning how to communicate their faith comfortably. “Stage 5: Mobilize The Church’s Evangelism Specialists—The Ten Percent.”²⁹ The fifth step to a contagious church transformation is 2 Corinthians 5:11, 14’s call to inspire others. The goal of this phase is to recruit and assemble a team from within the

²⁶ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 80.

²⁷ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 67.

²⁸ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 87.

²⁹ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 105.

congregation of members with the gifts and heart of evangelism. This group furnishes the church with fresh ideas for reaching the unchurched with the gospel of Jesus Christ while keeping the fire burning among each other and the church. “Stage 6: Unleash An Array Of Outreach Ministries And Events.”³⁰ The sixth step moving the church towards contagious church transformation is Colossians 4:15’s take advantage of every opportunity biblical principle. The goal of this phase is to inundate the community with as many avenues as possible exposing as many people as possible to the good news of life and life more abundantly in Jesus the Christ. Mittelberg’s personal evangelism based approach to becoming a contagious church offers techniques for constructing a proclamation of the gospel component of a local church vision for congregational outreach.

Per the ecclesiological arguments of Stone, in today’s postmodern culture, a local church can only be effective in reaching the unchurched with the gospel of Jesus Christ if she provides to the community with tangible ways of tasting, touching and feeling the love of Jesus Christ. The evangelism models of McIntosh and Martin, Pierson and Mittelberg offer tools for implementing a postmodern-sensitive approach for local church-based outreach into the community. Congregational outreach ministry is the local church’s strategy for initiating individuals into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. As such, this doctoral ministry model will utilize McIntosh and Martin’s two-pronged evangelistic thrust of establishing the church’s presence in the community by meeting needs as the way of opening doors of opportunity for the sharing of the gospel with community residents.

³⁰ Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church*, 129.

The project's model will use Pierson's needs-based evangelism model to establish the church's loving presence in the community through actions of compassion. The prospective model of ministry will employ Mittelberg's congregational approach to personal evangelism as the evangelistic strategy for reaching people with the proclamation of the gospel.

An outreach ministry strategy of this sort bridges the relational gap between a congregation and the surrounding community. Such is the testimony of African-American theologian, Sheron C. Patterson. Her local church's outreach initiative enabled the church to repair broken lives, restore fractured relationships and reach people for Jesus Christ. The community-focused effort also aided the rehabilitation the church's image and relevancy in the community. The need-meeting ministry was called "The Love Clinic—a contemporary, Christian-based relationship ministry for single and married persons."³¹ "We were no longer 'that stuck-up Methodist church on the corner.' Rather, we became 'the church with the relationship seminars.'"³² African-American pastor Jarvis Collier sees evangelism as the "the proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ with a view to bringing about the reconciliation of the sinner to God the Father through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit."³³ In *What Happened To Christian Evangelism?*, Collier contends the church of today has lost and must rekindle her love for the lost as mandated by both the Great Commission and the declining morale and morality of society. Patterson's non-traditional example of a need-meeting ministry coupled with Collier's call for renewed zeal for sharing the message of salvation in Jesus

³¹ Gordon, *Growing the African American Church*, 19.

³² Gordon, *Growing the African American Church*, 25.

³³ Jarvis L. Collier, *What Happened to Christian Evangelism*, 2.

Christ serves as motivational factors for developing a congregational outreach ministry vision for reaching the community with the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion.

The Anthropological Impact On Outreach Ministry In This Present Age

For Professor Paul G. Hiebert, engaging theology with other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, biology, and psychology is a best practice for enhancing the evangelistic and discipleship efforts of the church. As a missiologist and Christian anthropologist, Hiebert believed the combination of theology's "what to think" and the other disciplines' perspectives on "how and why we think" is essential for converting individuals, communities, and cultures into mature followers of Jesus Christ. In *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding Of How People Change*, Hiebert deals with the subject-matter of worldviews, their determinant influence on beliefs and behavior, their construction and the necessity of a church originated, owned and purported biblical worldview. In the introduction section of his book, Hiebert provided an overview of his theological anthropology in stating,

Conversion to Christ must encompass all three levels: behavior, belief, and the worldview that underlies these . . . it is important to differentiate between conversion as personal transformation and conversion as corporate transformation. Leading individuals to faith in Jesus Christ is the evangelistic dimension of mission. People come as they are, with their histories and cultures. We cannot expect an instant transformation of their behavior, beliefs, and worldviews. It is important, therefore, to disciple them into Christian maturity. This includes a transformation not only in the way people think and behave but also in their worldviews.

Conversion must also be corporate. The church in each locale . . . must define what it means to be Christian . . . It must take responsibility for defining and keeping biblical orthodoxy, and it must do so by defining how Christianity is different from its pagan surroundings. This is the faithfulness side of mission . . . The process of maintaining true faith in this world and age is ongoing, for each

generation must learn to think biblically about being Christian in its particular context.³⁴

Though Hiebert's primary target audience is those in the arena of missiology, his anthropological concepts on worldviews are insightful to any local church practitioner's understanding of how to prepare a congregation for community outreach.

Anthropology is the field of science which deals with the study of human beings, their origins, their physical, cultural and biological characteristics as well as their social customs and beliefs. Anthropology wants to answer the questions concerning how do humans view the world, live in the world, understand the world and make decisions in the world in an attempt to live the good life. Hiebert believes worldviews provide the systems we employ in our efforts to achieve what we construe as the good life. As such, he defines worldview as "the 'fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people makes about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives.' Worldviews are what people in a community take as given realities, the maps they have of reality that they use for living."³⁵ In other words, what we know, how we feel and what we judge to be moral or immoral serve as interactive, intertwining navigational devices shaping our inhabitation in the world.

Building upon anthropology's nineteenth century German roots and the contributions of anthropologists through the twentieth century, Hiebert advanced his worldview ideology from Edward Sapir's "world outlook" construct and preferred brand of anthropological study. World outlook was a terminology coined by Sapir referring to "those general attitudes, views of life, and specific manifestations of civilization that give

³⁴ Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding Of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 11-12.

³⁵ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 15.

a particular people its distinctive place in the world. Emphasis is put not so much on what is done and believed . . . as on how what is done and believed functions in the whole life of that people . . .”³⁶ Hiebert’s examination of the how of what is done and believed led him to the following anthropological conclusions.

First, worldviews lead to the formation of belief systems and belief systems inform behavior. Our patterns of behavior and modes of living are an expression of what we believe about life. What we believe about life is derived from our view of the world, how it is working and how it should work. Our outwardly observed actions are the surface level manifestations of what we believe inwardly. Beliefs are the developments of a deeply embedded level or sets of patterns, rules, and attitudes. These embedded patterns, rules and attitudes are what Hiebert refers to as worldviews. They are the internal determinates that dictate how we live out our lives. They are the motivational factors that move us in one direction or the other in life. When the winds of life or social currents blow us northward, our beliefs determine whether we act in agreement with or antithetical to those winds. They are at the very core of our existence as humans. In agreement, sociologist Christian Smith noted, we as humans “simply cannot function at all in our human lives without first committing ourselves to sets of assumptions and presupposed beliefs that make any functioning human life possible.”³⁷ We cannot do until we know what to do. What to do is predisposed by what we believe. What we believe is a derivative of what we accept as our web of guiding patterns, rules, and attitudes for how to live life. This web conditions what we think and the way we think about what we

³⁶ Edward Sapir, *Selected Writings in Language, Culture, and Personality* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1949), 11.

³⁷ Christian Smith, *Moral, Believing Animals: Human Personhood and Culture* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 54.

think. It shapes the way we feel and how we should feel. This guiding web helps us act in ways which are good, right and moral. The conglomeration of patterns, rules, attitudes, assumptions and presupposed beliefs fashion the worldviews which comprise our belief systems which arbitrate our behavior in life.

Secondly, the effect of worldviews on our beliefs and our beliefs on our behaviors is not one-directional or linear. As we engage the world we live in, we encounter other worldviews manifesting themselves in behaviors different from our own. Those differing behaviors challenge and may even alter our beliefs. Altered beliefs challenge and at times alter our worldviews. The relationship between worldviews, beliefs, and behavior are multi-directional. Consequentially, worldviews shape how we live in the world and the world we live in shape our worldviews. In speaking of religion and its place in society as a social institution, sociologist Dalton Conley affirms Hiebert's assertion of the reciprocity between our worldviews, beliefs, and behavior. Per Conley, "As a social institution, religion has the power to radically alter global contours, but at the same time, the structure of a given society influences the way religious ideas take shape."³⁸ From a sociological perspective when seeking to understand the societal import and impact of religion and personal faith, there are two central questions to explore. "First, how is faith influenced by the larger social world? Second, how does faith shape our social world?"³⁹ The assumption is institutions shape society and society shapes institutions. For Conley, what is true of social institutions in society is also true for the individual person in society. Thus, the same principles of development and functionality apply to both the institutions

³⁸ Dalton Conley, *You May Ask Yourself* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2013), 613.

³⁹ Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, 613.

and individuals comprising society. As such one could argue, Conley's sociological approach to comprehending the relationship between humans, religion, and society lends credence to Hiebert's anthropological perspective on the multi-directional interaction between worldviews, beliefs, and behavior. As society influences institutions and individuals and individuals and institutions influence society, so does society influence worldviews and worldviews influence society. Our worldviews shape what we believe to be our desired goals in life. We then behave in society in such a way as to achieve those goals. As we engage society with our behavior wherein differing worldviews exist, society inversely impacts how we may or may not be able to behave. The subsequent impact on our behavior may challenge what we believe resulting in a potential change in our worldview.

Furthermore, being aware of the anthropological dynamism between worldviews, beliefs, and behavior is essential for personal maturity and upward social mobility. This anthropological awareness is what sociologist C. Wright Mills might refer to as the social imagination. According to Mills' social imagination ideology, "The first fruit of this imagination . . . is the idea that the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period . . ."⁴⁰ As such, through one's social imagination, one can think critically about the social world around him or her. This critical analysis performed by one's social imagination is what allows one to act accordingly to achieve his or her desired goals in life. Only by making the necessary adjustments in our behavior, beliefs and worldviews are we better positioned personally and socially to achieve what we define through our worldviews as the good life.

⁴⁰ Conley, *You May Ask Yourself*, 4.

Thirdly, worldviews are constructed and contested organically and informatively. Comprising our worldviews are the mental models we construct from our experiential human knowledge base. These mental models developed by our experiences with the physical world aid us in making sense of our experiences. The more experiences we have, the more enhanced our mental models become while enhancing our ability to formulate new models. Thus, assisting us in making choices and decisions in our attempt to live the good life. Life's experiences facilitate the organic construction of worldviews. Our worldviews are not only constructed, but they are contested as well. Primarily, because they are constructs of human origin and by nature, humans attempt to impose their worldviews on others for the sake of control, dominance, and power.⁴¹ As such, the constant natural interplay between competing worldviews further promotes organic worldview construction. Not only are worldviews constructed organically but they are constructed informatively as well. Informative worldview construction results from the intentional, conscientious examination of one's worldviews. Hiebert's worldview ideology suggests, for people to change, their worldviews must be transformed. Worldview transformation sometimes calls for informative measures because of the deeply embedded nature of our worldviews. "The problem with worldviews is that they are largely unnamed, unexamined, and unassailable. It is particularly difficult to examine our own worldview because it is hard to think about what we are thinking with."⁴² Therefore, we must be forced to surface our worldviews if we are to transform them. We do this by comparing and contrasting our constructed worldviews to other worldviews as

⁴¹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 47.

⁴² Hiebert, *Transforming Woldviews*, 320.

well as our ascribed worldviews. Worldview construction occurs both naturally and analytically.

Fourthly, myths serve as the foundational and root components for all worldviews.

These myths are not fictitious stories or fairytales as clearly exclaimed by Hiebert.

“In anthropology, the term takes on technical meaning. A myth is the overarching story, bigger than history and believed to be true, that serves as the paradigm for people to understand the larger stories in which ordinary lives are embedded. Myths are paradigmatic stories, master narratives that bring cosmic order, coherence, and sense to the seemingly senseless experiences, emotions, ideas, and judgments of everyday life by telling people what is real, eternal, and enduring. . . Myths give meaning, they look beneath the surface at what is really going on in this world. They are archetypes of human existence, told in story form by common folk who are not philosophers to give meaning to their lives and expression to the deep emotional and moral stresses they face. . . Myths are moral characters, setting forth what is acceptable and unacceptable in society. They define and illustrate good and evil in the stories of heroes and evildoers. . . myths tell people about the community to which they belong, their place in it, and the moral order of the society.”⁴³

Based on his anthropological understanding of myths and his theological convictions as a Christian, Hiebert believes divinely revealed in Scripture is a biblical worldview. The biblical worldview revealed in the Bible is to serve as the primary point of reference for understanding life, life’s purpose and life’s eternal destination as God the Creator has intended. Running through the whole of Scripture is an overarching human narrative which supports the formulation of a biblical worldview. “To understand Scripture, we must seek to understand the worldview themes that underlie the whole . . . one great story . . . it affirms that the God who spoke to Abraham . . . is the same God who revealed Himself in the person of Jesus . . . and that there is no salvation apart from God’s divine

⁴³ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 66.

plan.”⁴⁴ The myths of the Old and New Testaments work in concert to provide existential meaning and purpose for all Christians. They also orchestrate the presence, principles, and praxis for all congregations of Christians.

In acknowledging the expanse of time and the enormous landscape of interpretational differences stemming from the multiple stories, spiritual axioms and worldview themes present in Scripture, Hiebert calls for the continual examination and reformation of biblical worldview claims. In particular, for the sake of cultural and ecclesial relevancy, accuracy and efficacy. This process of continual examination is what Hiebert refers to as cooperate conversion. For Hiebert, every congregation must demonstrate its faithfulness to Christ by espousing and exemplifying what Christianity is and is not in accordance to the biblical worldview revealed in Scripture. It is up to each local church to define and refine their purported biblical worldview and strive for conformity to it. The process of cooperate conversion is how the church and congregants of every generation measure their missional success and obedience. Per sociologist Christian Smith, we moderns “every bit as much as . . . our ancestors . . . most fundamentally understand what is reality, who we are, and how we ought to live by locating ourselves within the larger narratives and metanarratives that we hear and tell, and that constitute what is for us real and significant.”⁴⁵ Thus, narratives motivate and measure human actions and activities. Smith sees among the many narratives humans live by, what she calls a Christian metanarrative. “The Christian metanarrative . . . tells an all-encompassing story about the origin and purpose of the cosmos, about the nature and

⁴⁴ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 266.

⁴⁵ Smith, *Moral Believing Animals*, 64.

destiny of humanity, about fundamental moral order. It offers a master narrative, that seeks to govern all other narratives below and within it.”⁴⁶ What Smith calls a Christian metanarrative, Hiebert calls the biblical worldview revealed by God in Scripture. If narratives constitute our individual and collective identities and practices, then cooperate conversion conditioned by a biblical worldview and the narratives in Scripture is important for directing congregational life and praxis.

Conclusion

For the proposed ministry model to be successful in expanding FABC’s praxis to include a vision for outreach, it must transform FABC’s beliefs and behaviors. Christian missiologist Paul G. Hiebert’s four above anthropological assertions suggests this is attainable by challenging congregant worldviews with a Scripture-grounded biblical worldview. The driving motivation of Hiebert’s anthropological quest is the goal of advancing the kingdom building agenda of Jesus Christ. Such is the goal of the ministry praxis of congregational outreach. If worldviews define beliefs and beliefs determine behavior, then to modify local church praxis parishioner worldviews must undergo a transformation. If worldview alteration occurs through the multi-directional interplay between worldviews, beliefs, and behavior, then facilitating instructional sessions within the congregation will promote congregant worldview transformation. Since worldviews are the composition of the mental models we create from our repository of human knowledge, then didactic encounters infused with the tenants of a biblical worldview will influence congregational activities. Insomuch as myths serve as the foundation of

⁴⁶ Smith, *Moral Believing Animals*, 69.

worldview formulations, then a biblical worldview contrived from Scripture can be used to revolutionize local church worldviews and practices. Thereby paving the way for embracing a local church vision for the ministry of congregational outreach.

The evangelistic theologies and methodologies of Bryan P. Stone, Gary McIntosh and Glen Martin, Robert D. Pierson, and Mark Mittelberg provide the framework for constructing the vision for a relevant ministry of outreach to be implemented by FABC. Congregational outreach ministry is the local church's strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. FABC's congregational outreach ministry model will mirror McIntosh and Martin's "finding them" evangelism methodology. The proposed outreach model's actions of compassion segment will establish the church's viable and visible presence in the West End community of Lexington with need-meeting initiatives. The model's proclamation of the gospel component will utilize the established need-meeting initiatives and other tailor-made community programs as avenues for verbally introducing people to the gospel of Jesus Christ. FABC's actions of compassion arm of ministry will feature aspects of Pierson's need-based evangelism model. The proclamation of the gospel arm of FABC's outreach will highlight dynamics of Mittelberg's evangelism model for maximizing the local church's efforts of reaching people with the gospel message. FABC's ministry model for congregational outreach will facilitate the church's ability to both bless and be blessed by the residents of the West End neighborhood of Lexington. By embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision for the local church, FABC will be better positioned to achieve her mission of becoming "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." Now with the DMin project's four

foundational bases covered, the candidate is ready to construct the project's proposed model of ministry, implement the model and test the model.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

If FABC is to achieve her mission of becoming “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community” then she must bridge the relational divide currently existing between herself and her community. As FABC’s current pastor, one of the pastoral objectives of the doctoral aspirant is to shepherd the congregation into accomplishing her mission. The candidate hypothesized FABC could bridge the relational gap thus fulfilling her missional objective by providing congregational outreach initiatives to the community. For this reason, the doctoral student developed a model of ministry designed to lead FABC into embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision. Determining the success of the model will be the model’s ability to challenge as well as change FABC’s existing congregational praxis to include the incorporation of a vision for outreach. The research, engagement and examination of various scriptures, theologians, ministry practitioners, ministry leaders, ministry models, methodologies, and ideologies provided the biblical, historical, theological and theoretical support for the development of the project’s model of ministry.

The Biblical Foundations chapter features the exegesis of an Old and New Testament passage. These two passages were used to anchor the model scripturally. In 2 Kings 2:19-22, the prophet Elisha contends with the city of Jericho’s ecological crisis of

a contaminated water supply. A central point of emphasis from the narrative is involvement and intervention. As Elisha got involved with the community by addressing a community need, God intervened and resolved a community problem. Elisha's involvement coupled with God's divine intervention solidified the community's faith in God. The Matthew 5:1-16 portion of Jesus' Sermon On The Mount provides strong support for a vision of community outreach. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus called His disciples "the salt of the earth." Jesus used the salt of the earth missional metaphor as a call to action, social involvement and community engagement. The earthly assignment of Jesus' ambassadors entailed both the verbal communication of the good news as well as the visible manifestation of the good news. 2 Kings 2:19-22 and Matthew 5:1-16 served as the model's biblical paradigms advocating for the necessity of a vision for congregational outreach. The passages also were used to demonstrate how outreach in the community becomes an asset for building community relationships and the growth of the church.

Conditioned by the above Biblical Foundations' texts, the Historical Foundations segment spotlights the outreach efforts of the eighteenth-century layperson, journalist and philanthropist Robert Raikes and the Sunday School Movement. During the era of the Industrial Revolution, Raikes' efforts addressed a community concern by filling an educational void in the city of Gloucester, England. His desire to enrich the unchurched and underprivileged youth of the lowest echelon in Gloucester resulted in what many termed the Sunday School Movement. Raikes' Sunday School model coupled secular education and religious instruction to lift the veil of ignorance overshadowing the masses of his day. He utilized the Bible and other catechism material to teach students how to read, write and conduct themselves morally. The evangelistic motivation of the Sunday

School Movement was not numeric church growth but the social and scholastic advancement of children. The ancillary payoff was numeric church growth. Raikes' ministry to the community served as the impetus for developing one of the project's congregational teaching components. The instructional component supported a vision for relevant outreach to the community by highlighting FABC's first four pastors and their contributions to the city of Lexington and the state of Kentucky.

The end goal of the proposed model of ministry is the enhancement of the congregational praxis of FABC. Church beliefs govern church praxis. As such, the Theological Foundations section provides an ecclesiological argument and definition for congregational outreach ministry. Tantamount to praxis reformation is a proper understanding of the identity and purpose of the local church. The DMin candidate used John Hammett's contemporary ecclesiology, Christianity's traditional concept of apostolicity, and basic tenants of the Baptist faith to define the identity and purpose of the local church. He defined the local church as an assembly of the called out baptized disciples of Jesus Christ who have been called upon to fulfill the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. Based upon this definition of the local church and Scott J. Jones' construal of evangelism as a first phase step in the disciple-making venture, congregational outreach ministry is the local church's strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. A congregational outreach ministry strategy enables the local church to fulfill her disciple-making mandate. The Theological Foundations' ecclesiological developments provided praxis-altering arguments for embracing and implementing a congregational vision of outreach.

To achieve the purposes and goals of the proposed model of ministry, two points of implementation needed formulization. One, what methodology would the model employ to lead FABC into embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision? Secondly, what would be the outreach ministry vision, the congregation will be led to embrace? The Theoretical Foundations chapter provided the hypothetical methodology for these two crucial points of project implementation. For the proposed ministry model to be successful in expanding FABC's praxis to include a vision for outreach, it must transform FABC's beliefs and behaviors. Christian anthropologist Paul G. Hiebert suggests this task requires challenging congregant worldviews with a Scripture-grounded biblical worldview. Worldviews define beliefs and beliefs determine behavior. As purported by Hiebert, modification of local church praxis necessitates the transformation of parishioner worldviews. Based upon Hiebert's anthropologic assertions, changing congregant worldviews is achievable through the intentional facilitation of didactic and sermon presentations. As such, the project's model utilized a lesson plan comprised of sermon series, Bible Study lessons and leadership workshops to achieve congregant worldview transformation. The content of the constructed lesson plan consisted of the project's biblical, historical and theological research.

Following the construction of the lesson plan, was the development of the congregational outreach ministry vision. The evangelistic moorings and models of Bryan P. Stone, Gary McIntosh and Glen Martin, Robert D. Pierson and Mark Mittelberg provided the framework for constructing the vision for a relevant ministry of outreach to be implemented by FABC. As previously defined, congregational outreach ministry is the local church's strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus

Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. FABC's vision of outreach will highlight a model of ministry featuring both proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion outreach ministry components. FABC's two-pronged approach of congregational outreach will mirror McIntosh and Martin's "finding them" evangelism methodology. The outreach model's actions of compassion arm will establish the church's viable and visible presence in the West End community of Lexington by implementing aspects of Pierson's needs-based evangelism strategy. The outreach ministry's proclamation of the gospel arm will seek to present the gospel of Jesus Christ by utilizing dynamics of Mittelberg's personal evangelism strategy. FABC's ministry of congregational outreach will facilitate the church's ability to both bless and be blessed by neighborhood residents, thereby eradicating the relational gap between the congregation and community.

Methodology

The primary objective of the candidate's DMin project was the development and implementation of a model of ministry designed to lead FABC down the path of embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision. Achievement of this goal required the broadened of FABC's praxis to incorporate such a vision into the life of the church. Due to the nature of the project, the DMin aspirant opted to utilize the qualitative case study research design as the research methodology for conducting a responsive action research project. A qualitative action research approach is best suited for developing and testing a model designed to change congregational attitudes and behaviors in an attempt to solve a congregational problem. The project used action research techniques to

conduct pre and post surveys in the form of questionnaires to ascertain a congregational understanding of outreach ministry, acceptance of the necessity of outreach ministry and preparedness for engaging the community through outreach ministry. The qualitative approach provided the most conducive methodology for measuring the model's ability to convince a local church to embrace outreach as a means for building mutually beneficial community relationships.

If this project's proposed model of ministry successfully expands FABC's congregational praxis to encompass the work of outreach ministry to the community several things will occur. First, the congregation will receive an ecclesiological definition and understanding of congregational outreach ministry. Secondly, the membership will obtain a basis for the necessity of congregational outreach ministry to the community based on a biblical paradigm featuring the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ and the doctrinal tenants of FABC's Baptist faith tradition. Thirdly, the congregation will acquire an outreach ministry-related understanding of her precious foundational history as a church coupled with an understanding of how outreach ministry can serve as an effective evangelistic tool in today's postmodern culture. Fourthly, FABC will embrace a congregational vision for outreach ministry and a proposed strategic plan for vision implementation.

Since the researcher chose the church's acceptance of a vision for outreach as a critical project measurable, facilitating congregational participation in the project was crucial. Project involvement required the cooperation of both congregational leadership and laity. For congregational praxis to change in regards to building community relationships through outreach, both leadership and laity had to embrace the vision and

strategic plan for outreach ministry. The two specific areas of FABC's leadership chosen to participate in the project were the Deacons and Finance Ministry teams. These two areas of leadership are the most influential within the FABC family.

Components of the project's ministry model were designed to garner congregant support of a vision of outreach through sermon series, Bible Study sessions, and leadership presentations. The project engaged the entire congregation during Sunday Morning Worship Services through two two-part sermonic series entitled "Can They Come?" from Matthew 11:25-30 and "Will We Go?" from Matthew 28:16-20. See Appendix A for all sermon outlines. The model provided religious instruction to leadership and laity at the 12:00 pm and 6:00 pm Tuesday Bible Study sessions. Presented to both groups were a six-week study divided into two three-week series. The first three-week Bible Study series was a set of lessons based upon the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ as summarized in Matthew 4:23-25, 9:35-38. The series was entitled "The Ministry That Transformed Lives." In the subsequent three-week series, Bible Study attendees received instruction through a historical, ecclesial and doctrinal component based upon the congregation's history and tenants of FABC's Baptist faith tradition. The series was entitled "The Next Chapter: The Salt That Transforms Lives." See Appendix B for all Bible Study lesson layouts. Congregants were administered pre and post surveys in the form of a questionnaire for the purpose of ascertaining the outcome of their interaction with the model's sermon and Bible Study series. The pre-survey was distributed and collected at the beginning of the first Bible Study session. The post-survey was distributed and collected at the conclusion of the last Bible Study session.

The project's model further engaged FABC's leadership through special workshop presentations. The Deacons Ministry team took part in a vision casting workshop which tested a leadership component of the ministry model entitled "The Church That Transforms Lives." The presentation centered around Matthew 4:12-25 and 9:35-10:5. The Deacons Ministry's decision to support or not support the pastoral recommendation to present an outreach vision to the church body gauged the presentation's effectiveness. The researcher presented a similar type session based upon Matthew 6:19-34 to the Finance Ministry team entitled "It Takes Money To Transform Lives." See Appendix C for all leadership workshop presentations. The presentation included an FABC financial review and seven-year budget proposal for funding the outreach ministry vision. Finance Ministry commitment to funding congregational outreach as an annual budget line-item served as the project measurable for the Finance Ministry workshop.

As already noted, leadership and laity participated in answering pre and post surveys produced to measure parishioner perspectives of the ministry of congregational outreach to the community. The project set as its participation goal approximately forty percent of the church's active adult population. Forty percent was the percentage chosen for two reasons. Number one, an average of one-hundred and thirty adults attends Sunday Morning Worship. Of the one-hundred and thirty, approximately fifty are weekly attendees of Tuesday Bible Study sessions. Also, of the one-hundred and thirty, fifty to sixty are weekly attendees of Sunday School. Number two, FABC Annual Session and Mid-Year Review church meetings average fifty in attendance. Based upon those attendance factors, forty percent of the church's active adult laity participates in determining congregational direction.

As previously stated, the candidate utilized responsive action research methodology as a qualitative approach to executing this case study project. “Action Research is social research carried out by a team encompassing a professional researcher and members of an organization or community seeking to improve their situation.”¹ Action research was the chosen research method because at the heart of action research is the addressing of a problem through improved practice. The goal of the candidate’s doctoral project was to help FABC bridge the relational gap between the church and the community. Through action research, the hope was to develop a model of ministry which would introduce new as well as change existing congregational practices. Improved praxis will enable the congregation to build meaningful relationships with fellow West End residents.

Since the problem-solving methodology of action research is team-based, the researcher made use of the assistance of two teams to carry out the work of the project. One team consisted of Context Associates. The second team was composed of Professional Associates. Individuals from within the candidate’s context of ministry comprised the team of Context Associates. These individuals assisted with survey development, data collection, data cataloging, and data analysis. The team of Professional Associates consisted of individuals with a doctorate of ministry or some other type of terminal degree. The team of Professional Associates aided by providing critique of written documentation, methodology recommendations, and research questions to consider. They also supplied suggested research material via books and articles and guided the researcher as needed.

¹ Jackie Baston, “Introduction to Action Research” (lecture, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, August 21, 2014).

The project's model of ministry was designed to change minds, opinions, behaviors, beliefs, actions and practices. As such, the project is more qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. Responsive action research best facilitates the qualitative approach needed for this project. One of the central components of responsive action research is data collection. Because the data collected was of the qualitative sort, the researcher drafted an initial survey in the form of a questionnaire for the individual assessment of each congregational participant. The survey was to measure the following project goals. One, did the congregation receive an ecclesiological definition and understanding of congregational outreach ministry? Two, was the membership convinced of the necessity of congregational outreach per a biblical paradigm of Jesus' earthly ministry and doctrinal tenants of FABC's Baptist faith tradition? Three, did the congregants acquire an outreach-related understanding of her history supplemented with an understanding of how outreach ministry serves as an effective evangelistic tool in today's postmodern culture?

As a subset representing the project's target audience, the team of Context Associates took the draft survey to determine its reliability and validity. The researcher along with the Context Associates then refined the initial draft into a final survey format. Based on the expertise, experience, and recommendations of the team, the draft was reformatted to improve the validity of the survey and thus strengthening the reliability of the survey's results. The structure of the survey was a combination of multiple choice, Likert scale, and open-ended questions. The multiple choice questions were used to pinpoint participant understanding and feelings towards the church's ability to serve the community. Likert scale questions were utilized to assess changes in participant attitudes

after engaging the model's teaching components. Change in attitude would indicate the potentiality of change in congregational praxis. Opened-ended questions were employed for two primary reasons. One, to assess the uniformity of language among participants in articulating certain project definitions and points of emphasis. Two, to allow participants to provide feedback in their own words.

Administration of the survey took place before implementing the ministry model's instructional components. Congregant answers were cataloged per the questions asked by the survey. For reporting results and analysis, multiple choice answers were charted on a bar graph. The team determined a coded template to use in recording the scaled responses. Open-ended responses were grouped and registered in template form based on keywords or phrases. All responses were entered into Excel spreadsheets which allowed for the ease of viewing, analyzing, and comparing the collected data. The research team then analyzed the answers provided for the following reasons. Number one, pre-survey answers provided before model implementation served as a benchmark for measuring the impact of the model's various components. Secondly, analysis of the answers provided an opportunity to adjust model components to address areas of congregational concern. Thirdly, answers provided the researcher with a more accurate insight into the understanding, mindset, and attitude of the congregation in regards to the surrounding community, the purpose of the local church and feelings toward outreach ministry. The same survey process was followed at the completion of the model's teaching and preaching components to assess change in acceptance, attitude, and readiness for congregational outreach. The researcher and team of associates assessed congregational readiness for carrying out a vision of outreach by comparing post model

and pre model survey results. The analysis evaluated whether or not the model was successful in preparing the FABC family for engaging the community through the efforts of outreach.

Implementation

The overarching objective of the researcher's DMin project was to help FABC achieve her congregational mission of becoming "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." Achieving the mission necessitates the bridging of the relational divide between the church and the surrounding community. The DMin candidate believes the church can repair the breach by embracing a vision for congregational outreach. As such, the researcher constructed, applied and tested a ministry model designed to shepherd the FABC family into funding and fulfilling a seven-year congregational outreach ministry vision. Following are the steps of project implementation. Note, all project implementation occurred during the calendar year of 2016 unless otherwise noted.

The key verse which served as the driving force for the work of this project was Matthew 5:13. There Jesus calls His disciples "the salt of the earth." For this reason, project implementation began August 1-5 with the charting of Jesus's earthly ministry as presented in the Gospel of Matthew. The month of September was used to construct the model's homiletical, instructional and survey components. Examination of Matthew's rendition of Jesus' earthly ministry led to the development of two two-part sermon series. The first series was entitled "Can They Come?" from Matthew 11:25-30. (See

Appendix A) The second series was "Will We Go?" from Matthew 28:16-20. (See Appendix A)

Next came the development of the six-week Bible Study series. The Bible Study series was divided equally into two parts. The Bible Study sessions were presented as fill-in the blank Powerpoint presentations with corresponding student fill-in the blank handouts. The first three-week series was based upon the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ as summarized in Matthew 4:23-25 and 9:35-38. It was entitled "The Ministry That Transformed Lives." (See Appendix B) These lessons highlighted characteristics of Jesus' ministry. The second three-week series was an ecclesial, doctrinal and historical study built upon the project's Theological Foundations research. This three-week series also presented some of the exegetical work performed on the 2 Kings 2:19-22 and Matthew 5:1-16 Biblical Foundations' passages. It was entitled "The Next Chapter: The Salt That Transforms Lives." (See Appendix B) These lessons re-examined FABC's doctrinal understanding of the local church. The three-week study also provided parishioners with a working definition of congregational outreach ministry. Bible Study attendees also received an argument for community outreach as exemplified by the social, medical, political and educational contributions of FABC's first four pastors and the church under their leadership.

Following the compilation of the project's sermons and lessons was the development of the Deacons and Finance Ministry workshop presentations. The Deacons Ministry leadership component was entitled "The Church That Transforms Lives." (See Appendix C) The presentation centered around Matthew 4:12-25 and 9:35-10:5. A similar type session based upon Matthew 6:19-34 was composed for the Finance Ministry

team. Their presentation was entitled “It Takes Money To Transform Lives.” (See Appendix C) Both workshop presentations featured arguments for the necessity of outreach based on church data such as whom the church baptized from 2006-2016, the percentage of the membership residing in the community and the direct correlation between church growth and the amount of money a church spends on evangelistic efforts.

Completing September’s month of development was the formulation of the pre and post test survey questionnaire. The survey fulfilled the task of measuring the congregation’s interaction with the model’s preaching and teaching apparatuses. The team of Context Associates tested an initial draft of the survey. Upon completing the pilot questionnaire, the researcher and team of associates assessed the survey. The research team evaluated the survey according to the project’s measurements, goals, and objectives. Survey assessment yielded the questionnaire’s final format. (See Appendix D)

The project’s teaching and preaching components were conducted during the months of October and November. The “Can They Come” sermon series (See Appendix A) was preached on Sundays, October 2nd and 9th. The series served as the official FABC project “Becoming The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community” project kick-off. This initial sermon series served three purposes. One, to get the congregation revved up and excited about the upcoming six-week Bible Study series. Two, to facilitate the achievement of the project’s forty percent congregational participation goal. Three, to begin the process of challenging FABC’s attitudes toward the community and commitment to evangelism.

The Bible Study series was conducted during the church's weekly Tuesday 12:00 PM and 6:00 PM Bible Study sessions. "The Ministry That Transformed Lives" series (See Appendix B) was taught on October 11th, 18th, and 25th. During the first twenty minutes of class time on October 11th, the pre-survey questionnaire (See Appendix D) was administered to the class and collected. "The Next Chapter: The Salt That Transforms Lives" series (See Appendix B) was taught on November 1st, 8th, and 15th. Initially, the post-survey process was scheduled for the final twenty minutes of class on November 15th. However, due to lengthier but productive student-teacher dialogue during the November 1st, 8th, and 15th class times and a Pre-Thanksgiving Worship Service, the post-survey (See Appendix D) was not administered until Tuesday, November 29th. The research team cataloged and analyzed pre-survey results during the weeks of October 24th and October 31st. Post-survey results were cataloged and analyzed during the weeks of December 5th and December 12th. The candidate and group of Context Associates performed pre and post test comparisons and conclusions during the week of December 19th.

Concluding the proposed ministry model's preaching and teaching components was the second sermon series. The DMin student preached the two-part "Will We Go" series (See Appendix A) on Sundays, November 20th and 27th. The series served as an official conclusion to the congregation's interaction with the pedagogic features of the DMin project. The sermonic thrust functioned as an attempt to achieve a three-fold purpose. One, to conclude the laity's interaction with the project's model of ministry. Two, to call for a continuation of action in the form of embracing of a congregational outreach ministry vision. Three, to prepare the Deacons and Finance Ministries for their

upcoming engagement with the project's leadership components. Their workshops were designed to gain the endorsement and financial commitment to the vision as a precursor to the vision's presentation to the FABC family.

The Finance Ministry workshop (See Appendix C) was presented on Wednesday, December 7th. The workshop included an FABC 2016 end-of-the-year financial review. Also, presented in the workshop was the proposal of a seven-year investment strategy for funding the church's outreach vision. Beginning with the 2017 Church Budget, the proposal asked for a percentage of the church's annual income be committed to funding the vision for outreach. The proposal also called for an annual funding increase with the goal of reaching at least ten percent of the church's annual income by the end of a seven-year period. The Deacons Ministry workshop (See Appendix C) was initially scheduled for Thursday, December 15th. However, the inability of three of the church's nine Deacons to attend the workshop caused the researcher to opt for the cancellation of the session. Due to the Christmas holiday and first of the year church activities, the workshop was rescheduled later than anticipated. However, rescheduling allowed the researcher to adjust the workshop to include a presentation of FABC's seven-year congregational outreach ministry vision. The presentation was presented on Thursday, January 19, 2017.

The final project component to be developed and presented was the congregation's strategic plan for providing a ministry of outreach. The project implementer cast the plan in the form of a seven-year vision for church growth. FABC's seven-year congregational outreach ministry vision (See Appendix E) was formulated during the months of December 2016 and January 2017. The DMin candidate cast the vision during the church's Annual Session on Saturday, January 28, 2017. In response to

the casting of the vision during the Annual Session, it was motioned and seconded for FABC to receive the seven-year congregational outreach ministry vision inclusive of the financial strategy for funding the vision. The motioned was carried unanimously with no objectors or abstainers.

Summary of Learning

The project's implementer hypothesized, if properly prepared, FABC would embrace a ministry vision for congregational outreach. The embracing of such a vision would lead the congregation down the path of bridging the relational divide between herself and her beloved community. Bridging the divide will further assist the historic church in becoming "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." To this end, the candidate designed, implemented and tested the project's proposed model of ministry. For the ministry model to be considered successful, it had to achieve three specific objectives. First, the model would have to provide FABC with a definition and understanding of what congregational outreach ministry is. Second, the membership would have to agree to the necessity for a vision of outreach as a way of staying true to her identity as a local church. Third, the church would become convinced outreach ministry is vital to the life of the church in today's post-modern culture. These objectives were measured by the project's primary assessment tool, a survey questionnaire composed by the candidate and team of Context Associates. (See Appendix D)

Administration of the survey occurred before and after presenting the model's Bible Study component. The researcher along with the project's Context Associates and Context of Ministry participants walked away from the project with several key learnings.

The collection and analyzation of the project's participant data yielded the following discoveries.

One of the first goals of the project was the achievement of a congregational participation rate of forty percent of the active adult membership. The percentage equates to a participant count of fifty. The goal was to have at least fifty members take the surveys and attend the six-week Bible Study series. Forty-six took the pre-survey. There would have been fifty if the four members of the research team did not take the survey as a pilot group. Thirty-six took the post-survey. The average Bible Study attendance over the six-week period was forty-two. The research team made several observations. One, having a sermon series as the kick-off to promoting the Bible Study series was effective in generating participation. Maintaining the attendance at forty-two was good but below the desired count. Also, fewer people participated in the post-survey process. The team concluded the Thanksgiving holiday was the reason for the decrease. The church normally shuts down all mid-week services and activities for the remainder of the year after Thanksgiving. Due to more in-depth teacher-student dialogue during the second three-week Bible Study series, time did not permit for the administration of the post-survey at the end of the last Bible Study session as originally planned. The class was asked to reconvene for a special session on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. The post-survey was passed out and collected following a Bible Study recap. The researcher recommends there be no breaks in between any sermons, lesson presentations and pre and post survey conductions.

The first four survey questions were multiple choice questions. The first question was "What do you believe the community needs most from the FABC congregation?"

According to pre-survey responses, 24% believed the community most needed FABC to be visible. 39% said to go beyond the wall to share the good news of Jesus Christ. 13% stated the reduction of crime, drugs and gun violence. 15% said provide mentoring job/career skills, and education to people in the community. 9% stated to serve the homeless and less fortunate. Post-survey results yielded one drastic difference. 72% of the participants believed the community most needed from FABC was to go beyond the walls to share the news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Making up for the increase from 39% to 72% was a decline in all the other areas. The shift in percentage indicated participants received one of the models central points of emphasis. The church is not merely another social service agency. Providing a reduction in crime rates is admirable. Sponsoring job-readiness is commendable. However, those objectives can not be the end goals of congregational outreach. The end goal of congregational outreach is the connecting of individuals with Jesus Christ. Therefore, what the community needs most from FABC is what the community can not get from any other societal entity. A relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important need every community resident has. The most important work of the church is the mission of making disciples. Bettering the community through social impact becomes an avenue for reaching the unchurched with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Later survey results will demonstrate the church did not loose but strengthened their commitment to social impact as a means of spreading the love and gospel of Jesus Christ.

The next question asked was “What Jesus characteristic do you think is most lacking in the Church’s ability to serve others in our community?” Participants were asked to select the top three characteristics out of a list of seventeen. The top three

choices respectively were unity, compassion, and acceptance. The top three choices in the pre-survey results were only separated by one count apiece. Post-survey responses respectively were commitment, compassion, and unity. Unlike the pre-survey count, the post-survey yielded almost a double digit difference between the top choice and the second two choices. Furthermore, the second and third choices tied in the count. The research team had several thoughts on these results. Participants clearly felt the church has compassion and unity problems. However, even though the church might have unity and compassion challenges, commitment is the majorly perceived problem. The research team believes if the church is persuaded to accept the vision for outreach then the commitment issue will be resolved. The result would then be a domino-effect. Carrying out the vision of outreach will eradicate the internal perception of being a church with a lack of compassion. Working together towards the common goal of reaching others for Christ would then help to foster congregational unity among the membership.

Question three was identical to question two except for one word. The question substituted “you” for “church” and read “What Jesus characteristic do you think is most lacking in your ability to serve others in our community?” The pre and post survey results for this question yielded pretty much the same responses. A lack of commitment was the top response. Moreover, a lack of commitment to evangelism was among the top three choices in both the pre and post survey conduction. The researcher believed participant responses to this question confirmed he was on the right track with his project’s focus. FABC is in need of a model of ministry designed to generate congregational commitment towards the efforts of elevating her evangelistic temperature.

The fourth and final multiple choice question asked “What are you willing to sacrifice to achieve the mission of being “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community?” These results further confirmed the results from question two and three. The overwhelming majority of participants selected the option of personal time in both the pre and post administration of the survey. Truly the membership feels convicted in their lack of personal and congregational commitment as a whole to reaching others for Christ. Their revealed conviction demonstrated an openness to embracing a congregational outreach ministry vision.

The next set of questions featured the Likert scale questions. These questions were primarily designed to measure the changes in participant attitude. Change in attitude are indicators of the potentiality of change in behavior. Question five of the questionnaire assessed if participants agreed “FABC is living out the mission of being “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” According to pre-survey responses, 52% agreed, 17% disagreed, 15% neither agreed or disagreed, 14 % strongly agreed, and 2% strongly disagreed. Post-survey, only 39% agreed, 19% disagreed, 31% neither agreed or disagreed, 11% strongly agreed, and 0% strongly disagreed. The research team made a couple of key assessments upon comparing these pre and post survey results. One, the model was successful in shifting the feelings of Bible Study attendees. From pre to post survey conductions, fewer people felt FABC was successfully fulfilling her congregational mission. Thus, necessitating the need for some level of improved actions. Second, the increase in the percentage of neither agree or disagree was misleading upon initial glance. What looked like indecision was a revealed readiness to move forward in ministry. In questions two and three above, a number of survey-takers stated the lack of

leadership as the most lacking in the church's ability to serve others in the community. The gray-area response reflected the fact that the church had supported previous church outreach initiatives such as the annual clothing giveaway and hand sanitizer and kleenex drive for the local elementary school. In their minds, FABC had been successful in as far as it relates to directives given by the pastor. Whatever they were not doing was not because they did not want to do. Instead, it was either the result of not knowing what to do or of waiting for the next directives on what to do. The increased percentage in neither agree or disagree actually, represented the opportunity available for pastoral leadership to shepherd the church into the ministry of congregational outreach.

Question six sought to ascertain participant feelings toward the statement "The membership of FABC is reflective of the surrounding community." Pre-survey results yielded the following sentiments. When coupling the agree and strongly agree percentages, 37% of the participants felt the church did reflect the surrounding community. Doing the same with the disagree and strongly disagree responses, 30% did not feel the church was reflective of the surrounding community. Moreover, 30% neither agreed or disagreed. Post-survey results stated, 30% felt the church was reflective, 44% felt the church was not reflective, and 25% neither agreed or disagreed. These comparisons were assessed based on two of FABC's demographic figures. One, only 15% of the membership are West End residents. Two, 14% of the 15% were members of the church prior to FABC's relocation to the West End in 1987. Although the model succeeded in altering participant sentiments, the research team felt the percentages in the categories of agree as well as neither agree or disagree was too high. The team felt the primary reason for these results was the question's lack of clarity. For instance, if

members answered the question based upon race, then the membership is reflective of the predominant race of the community. If members answered the questions based on whether or not the membership and community residents were experiencing the same social challenges such teenage pregnancy, job layoffs or loss of loved ones due to gun violence, then the membership is reflective of the community. Question six was not definitive enough to assess sentiments based on membership data. This question needs further defining for future usage.

Survey question seven provided insight into participants thoughts as to whether “Outreach ministries provide opportunities to share faith.” Pre-survey, 80% believed outreach ministries provided opportunities to share faith. Only 13 % disagreed. Post-survey, 92% agreed, and 0% disagreed. These results were extremely encouraging to the researcher. Shifting the percentage from 13% to 0% meant the model enlightened participants to the beneficial nature of outreach ministries. People were able to see how touching lives with the love of Jesus Christ opens up doors to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Question eight asked whether or not “Those benefiting from outreach should be required to participate in religious/church activities.” 44% felt those benefitting from outreach initiatives should be required to participate in church activities as opposed to 24% who did not feel participation should be required. Opinions in both categories increased according to the post-survey. 50% felt they should while 30% felt they should not. In reviewing these results through the lenses of previous questionnaire responses, the following observations were made. First, the congregation is open to outreach ministry but wants to avoid becoming just another social service entity. Participants feel the need

of making sure outreach efforts remained focused on the goal of initiating people into a relationship with Jesus Christ. Thus meaning, the model was successful in communicating the purpose of congregational outreach as an initiatory vehicle. Second, survey-takers are mindful of the church's reputation of being ecclesiastically strict. As such, some do not feel FABC should be legalistic in their outreach efforts which would adversely effect bridging the relational divide between the church and community. Third, the results denote the perspective that FABC's outreach initiatives should be relational in nature and not transactional. These are factors which will need monitoring if FABC's ministry of outreach is to have an ongoing positive influence on building mutually beneficial community relationships.

Questions nine and ten asked the same question in slightly two different ways. The two questions were an attempt to gauge how participants viewed the social role of the church in the neighborhood. Question nine desired to assess participant agreement with the statement "The church has a role in the education/economic/social development of the broader community." Question ten presented the statement "The community should engage the church for political/social advocacy regarding issues relevant to the community." An average of 90% of survey-takers agreed the church has a role in the education, economic and social development of the broader community. An average of 73% agreed the community should engage the church for political and social advocacy regarding issues relevant to the community. Only 12% percent disagreed, and no one strongly disagreed the church had a social role to play as a community partner. The research team believes the greater affinity towards an educational role over that of a political one reflects two dynamics. One, the church's number of retired teachers, the

number of members who currently are teachers or professors and the number of members who have family members currently in the school system. Two, the indication of education as a focused area of interest which could serve as the launching pad for an array of outreach initiatives.

The final three survey questions were open-ended questions. Question eleven was designed to test a major point of emphasis upon which the whole project hung. “What is your definition of the church?” The researcher believed, having everyone working from a proper definition of the church and having everyone working from the same definition of the church were essentials project goals. Pre-survey results revealed two alarming facts supporting the need for these two essential project goals. One, the church was not working from a central definition of the church. Responses were widely varied. Two, the most commonly given definition was only partially accurate. The most commonly given definition portrayed the church as simply a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ. Post-survey results produced the desired results. The model defined the church as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ called upon to fulfill the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. Though not exactly worded the same way, the overwhelming majority of participants defined the local church as a body of baptized believers with a disciple-making mission. Participants walked away with a common and praxis-oriented definition for the church. The local church is not just a body of disciples; it is a body with a mission. Congregational outreach assists the church in fulfilling her mandated mission to make disciples.

Question twelve provided participants the opportunity to express how the church should move forward in bridging the relational gap between the church and the

surrounding community. Responses to question twelve will assist in developing future outreach initiatives. Future efforts will identify areas of common interest and then seek to marry congregational interests and talents with community needs. The common thread among pre and post responses was the need for the church to go beyond the walls of the church and be more visibly active in the community.

Question thirteen offered participants the chance to articulate how the current congregation is living up to the standards of social impact set by FABC's first four pastors. The common sentiments expressed in answering this final survey question is promising to the future of FABC. For the most part, participants did not feel the church of today was living up to the standards set by FABC's forefathers. On the flip side, a large number felt that the current membership was living up to the standards of the church. The two responses almost seem contradictory, but they are not. They express two true sides of the same coin. True, the church has not been reaching out like it can and should. Also true, the need to impact the community which motivated the fathers of yesteryear is in the DNA of the church and is resurging through the saints of today. The current FABC congregation like in its founding past is seeing the need and being motivated to meet the need as the royal ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

The First African Baptist Church of Lexington, KY was founded in 1790. It is a church with a rich history and a bright future. The DMin candidate currently serves as the fourteenth pastor of the historic congregation. The congregational mission of FABC is to be "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community." Based on the

candidate's ministerial experience and contextual analysis of FABC, he believes FABC must overcome a major hurdle if she is to achieve her mission. Membership data from the past ten years revealed there is a relational gap currently separating the church from her surrounding neighborhood. The DMin aspirant believes FABC can begin the essential task of eradicating the divide by engaging the community through congregational outreach initiatives. As such, the candidate hypothesized, FABC, if properly challenged would embrace a congregational outreach ministry vision.

The goal of the DMin project was to develop, implement and test a model of ministry designed to shepherd FABC into implementing a vision for congregational outreach. Embracing and implementing such a vision required the expansion of FABC's current congregational praxis. According to Christian anthropologist Paul G. Hiebert, change in praxis is, in essence, a change in behavior. Changes in behavior necessitate a change in beliefs. A change in beliefs is a derivative of a change in a person's worldview. Thus, to change a congregation's praxis, congregant worldviews must be transformed by a biblical worldview. The project's model proposed to challenge and change FABC's praxis through pedagogic components consisting of sermon series, Bible Study lessons, and church leadership presentations.

The content and design of the proposed model of ministry consisted of the biblical, historical, theological and theoretical research performed as part of the DMin project. 2 Kings 2:19-22 and Matthew 5:1-16 served as Old and New Testament biblical anchors. Robert Raikes, the Founder of the Sunday School Movement, served as a historical exemplar depicting the impact of congregational outreach on social transformation and church growth. The contemporary ecclesiology of Baptist theologian John S. Hammett

supplied the theological basis for constructing a doctrinally-sound argument for congregational outreach ministry as it relates to fulfilling the missional mandate of the local church. The anthropological assertions of missiologist Paul G. Hiebert equipped the model with its theoretical framework and construction. The evangelistic ideologies and models of Bryan P. Stone, Gary McIntosh and Glen Martin, Robert D. Pierson, and Mark Mittelberg served as methodologies for crafting FABC's seven-year outreach vision and strategy of implementation.

Judging from pre and post survey responses, the proposed model of ministry was successful in achieving the project's objectives. The researcher hypothesized if the model of ministry were proven effective then FABC would embrace a vision and implementation strategy for a ministry of congregational outreach. After analyzing survey results, the researcher and his team of Context Associates felt FABC was poised to impact the West End community with the love and gospel of Jesus Christ. On Saturday, January 28, 2017, FABC confirmed the DMin candidate's hypothesis by unanimously voting to receive a seven-year vision for congregational outreach ministry. Moving forward, the candidate will utilize survey responses coupled with community conversations to marry congregational interests and talents to initiatives designed to address community concerns. The student will also leverage methods of measuring outreach programs to determine initiative effectiveness.

The DMin candidate is happy to report FABC has already begun implementing year one goals of the seven-year congregational outreach ministry vision. First of all, FABC is currently engaged in her first community-wide initiative which is a joint venture with the Human Development Institute of the University of Kentucky. The asset-based

community-building initiative is called the West End Community of Caring and Sharing Project. The project has a three-fold purpose. One, help the FABC family get better acquainted with the residents of the West End. Two, place FABC in a community-leading role of relationship-building among neighbors in the West End. Three, help identify and assist the developmentally disabled in becoming active participants in the West End community. Secondly, for the 2017 Lenten Season FABC is participating in the congregation's first six-week *Becoming a Contagious Christian* personal evangelism training class. The class time is convening Sunday afternoons from 2:30-4:00 pm following the 11:00 am Morning Worship Service and a 1:30 pm light lunch. The training has averaged forty in attendance four weeks into the six-week course period. Thirdly, FABC's Pastor, Sunday School Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent are currently reviewing *Sunday School That Really Works: A Strategy for Connecting Congregations and Communities*. The goal is to launch a "Sunday School That Really Works" outreach strategy in the Fall of 2017. The congregational outreach ministry vision has been cast and caught. FABC is stepping up as the salt of the West End striving to become "The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community."

APPENDIX A
SERMON OUTLINES

Can They Come Part1

Matthew 11:25-30

- I. Must Shift From Just Being Commanded To Being Commissioned
 - a. Jesus Commanded (Taught/Trained) His Disciples (Matthew 4-10)
 - b. Jesus Commissioned His Disciples (Matthew 10-11:1)
- II. Must Shift From Focusing On Self To Focusing On The Savior
 - a. John Disagreed With What Jesus Was and Wasn't Doing (Matthew 11:1-6)
 - b. John Had To Decrease So Jesus Increase (Matthew 11:7-19)
- III. Must Shift From Rebuking To Rejoicing
 - a. Jesus Didn't Let Rejection Stop Him From Rejoicing (Matthew 11:20-25)
 - b. Jesus Didn't Let Rejection Stop Him From Reaching (Matthew 11:20-28)

Can They Come Part2

Matthew 11:25-30

- I. Can the "All You" Come
 - a. All→Kind (Can all kinds come?)
 - b. All→Count (How many of the all kinds can come?)
- II. Can the All You "Who Labor" Come
 - a. Weary (Worn-out, Worked-over by Secular/Religious Yokes)
 - b. Ready
- III. Can the All You Who Labor and Are "Heavy Laden" Come
 - a. Overburdened
 - b. Over-Extended (Invoice→Write-Off)

Will We Go Part1

Matthew 28:16-20

- I. Will We Go In Light of the Resurrection
 - a. The Confirmation of the Resurrection (Successful Mission – Matthew 1:21, 28:1-10)
 - b. The Demonstration of the Resurrection (Matthew 27:62-28:10)
- II. Will We Go In spite of the Opposition
 - a. External Opposition (Matthew 28:11-15)
 - b. Internal Opposition (Matthew 28:16-17)
- III. Will We Go
 - a. Make Him Know To the Lost (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - b. Make Him Known At All Cost (Matthew 28:18, 20)

Will We Go Part2

Matthew 28:16-20

- I. Will We Go In Obedience To His Command
 - a. Beyond This Place of Worship (Matthew 28:16-17)
 - b. Beyond This Space And Go Work (Matthew 28:16, 19)

- II. Will We Go In Fulfillment of His Plan
 - a. Go And Expand His Kingdom All Over the Earth (Matthew 28:19)
 - b. Go And Be The Salt of the Earth (Matthew 5:13, 28:19-20)

- III. Will We Go Reach Everyone We Can
 - a. With the Good News of the Grace of God (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - b. With the Good News That No One is Beyond the Grace of God (Matthew 28:18-20)

APPENDIX B
BIBLE STUDY LESSON LAYOUTS

The Ministry That Transformed Lives Part1

Bible Study Series

1. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was destined to fulfill a kingdom agenda. – **Matthew 4:16**

2. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was destined to be a great light to those sitting in darkness and a shining light to those sitting in the shadow of death.
– **Matthew 4:16**

3. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was kingdom driven. – **Matthew 4:17**

4. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that went about all Galilee. – **Matthew 4:23**

5. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was strategically organized for the purpose of achieving a kingdom vision.
– **Matthew 4:23**

6. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that featured teaching in the synagogue, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing of all kinds of sickness and disease. – **Matthew 4:23**

7. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that grew and drew. – **Matthew 4:24-25**

The Ministry That Transformed Lives Part2

Bible Study Series

1. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that **went about**
all the cities and villages (in Galilee). – **Matthew 9:35**

2. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was
 strategically organized for the purpose of achieving a
 kingdom vision . – **Matthew 9:35**

3. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that featured **teaching**
in their synagogues, **preaching** the gospel of the kingdom and
 healing every kind of sickness and disease among the people.
– **Matthew 9:35**

4. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was moved by what
 He saw . – **Matthew 9:36**

5. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that was moved by
 compassion . – **Matthew 9:36**

6. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that **taught** His
disciples and then **sent out** His disciples. – **Matthew 5:1, 10:5**

7. The ministry that transformed lives was a ministry that taught His disciples that they
were the **salt of the earth** . – **Matthew 5:13**

The Next Chapter: The Salt That Transforms Lives Part1

Bible Study Series

1. The ministry that transformed lives called His disciples the **salt of the earth**. – **Matthew 5:13**
2. The salt that transforms lives is an **active** agent. – **Matthew 5:13**
3. The salt that transforms lives is a **positive** agent. – **Matthew 5:13**
4. The salt that transforms lives is a **locative** agent. – **Matthew 5:13**
5. The salt that transforms lives is a **transformative** agent. – **Matthew 5:13**
6. The salt that transforms lives must never lose its **flavor**.
– **Matthew 5:13; Luke 14:34-35**
7. The salt that transforms lives **ingratiates** itself to the community.
– **2 Kings 2:19**
8. The salt that transforms lives **responds** to the concerns of the community. – **2 Kings 2:20**
9. The salt that transforms lives **collaborates** with community partners to resolve community problems. – **2 Kings 2:20**
10. The salt that transforms lives **connects** God to the community and the community to God when it gets involved. – **2 Kings 2:21-22**

The Next Chapter: The Salt That Transforms Lives Part2
A Doctrinal Perspective
Bible Study Series

1. The New Testament term church is the Greek word ekklesia and is translated to mean the called out ones. – Matthew 16:18
2. In ancient Greece, the *ekklesia* is an assembly of the called out who are called upon to fulfill a purpose. – Acts 19:32, 39
3. According to the Baptist faith tradition, a true church bears the mark of apostolicity. – Ephesians 2:19-20
4. An essential defining apostolic characteristic of a true church is commitment to the Great Commission. – Matthew 28:18-20
5. What is wrong with how Article XIII of the 18 Articles of Faith defines a local church?

XIII. A Gospel Church.

We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its only scriptural officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons whose Qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles of Timothy and Titus.

6. As an *ekklesia* of Jesus Christ, FABC is an assembly of baptized believers in Jesus Christ fulfilling the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. – Matthew 28:18-20
7. According to Matthew 4:23, 9:35, 28:19, congregational outreach ministry is the local church's strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion.

The Next Chapter: The Salt That Transforms Lives Part3
It's In Our DNA
Bible Study Series

1. Like Peter “Old Captain” Durrett and Philip the evangelist, the salt that transforms lives must minister to the spiritual needs of the community.

– **Acts 8:26-31**

2. Like London Ferrill and the Good Samaritan, the salt that transforms lives must minister to the physical needs of the community. – **Luke 10:29-37**

3. Like Fredrick Braxton and Amos the prophet, the salt that transforms lives must minister to the socio-political needs of the community. – **Amos 5:10-15**

4. Like James Monroe and the Sons of Issachar, the salt that transforms lives must minister to the educational needs of the community.

– **1 Chronicles 11:1-3; 12:23, 32**

APPENDIX C
LEADERSHIP PRESENTATIONS

It Takes Money To Transform Lives Finance Ministry Presentation

George Barna, acclaimed marketing expert and author of *Evangelism That Works* states, *“the average church spends less than 2 percent of total revenues on local evangelism. . . But in comparison, . . . ’among the leading evangelistic churches, we found that it was more common to spend 10 to 20 percent of the annual budget for that purpose . . . In general, the churches that are most serious about evangelism seem to put their money where their mission is.’”*¹

The Mission of the Church – Matthew 28:18-20

† *Make Disciples → Bring Them In + Build Them Up*

† *< 1% of FABC’s 2006-2016 Baptisms Outside FABC Family*

The Vision for Congregational Outreach Ministry – Matthew 4:23-25, 5:13

† *The Ministry That Transformed Lives* – Matthew 4:23-25, 5:13

1. Was strategically organized.
2. Called His disciples the salt of the earth.

† *The Vision for Congregational Outreach Ministry* – Matthew 4:23-25, 9:35-38
FABC’s strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion.

The Funding Strategy for the Vision – Matthew 6:19-21 (19:21), 9:35-10ff

† *7 Year Plan for Investing (=>) 10% of Annual Income*
i.e. 2017 (1% of 2016 Net Income + 1% 2016 Tithes & Offerings = est. \$6,000 = 2% Annual Income)

¹ Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming A Contagious Church: Increasing Your Church’s Evangelistic Temperature*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 80.

The Church That Transforms Lives Deacons Ministry Presentation

The Ministry that transformed lives . . .

- † Was a ministry destined to fulfill a kingdom agenda. – Matthew 4:12-16
- † Was a ministry that utilized selected leaders to fulfill a kingdom agenda. – Matthew 4:18-22
- † Was a ministry that was strategically organized for the purpose of achieving a kingdom vision. – Matthew 4:23-25
- † Was a ministry that called His disciples the salt of the earth with a disciple-making mission to achieve. – Matthew 5:13, 28:18-20

The Church that transforms lives . . .

- † Must embrace the Mission of the Church. – Matthew 28:18-20
- † Must have leaders who are Great Commission Minded. – Matthew 5:1-2ff, 28:16-20
- † Must have a strategic plan for achieving the Great Commission. – Matthew 9:35-10:7ff, 28:18-20
- † Must have leaders who lead the church in achieving a Great Commission vision. – Matthew 28:16-20

The Mission of the Church → The Great Commission – Matthew 28:18-20

- † *Make Disciples → Bring Them In + Build Them Up*
- † *< 1% of FABC's 2006-2016 Baptisms Outside FABC Family*
- † *FABC 7 Year Congregational Outreach Ministry Vision (See attachment)*

APPENDIX D

FABC SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

FABC Survey Questionnaire

Please answer every question.

Please select 1 answer unless otherwise indicated.

What do you believe the community needs most from the FABC congregation?

1. Help reduce crime, drugs, gun violence
2. Serve the homeless and less fortunate
3. Be more visible in our community
4. Go beyond the walls to share the good news of Jesus Christ
5. Provide mentoring, job/career skills, and education to people in the community

What Jesus characteristic do you think is most lacking in the Church's ability to serve others in our community? **(Pick Top 3)**

1. Compassion
2. Love
3. Concern
4. Acceptance
5. Willingness to stand up/speak up for Justice
6. Patience
7. Selflessness (Humility)
8. Faith
9. Obedience
10. Commitment
11. Conviction
12. Working together in peace, unity and harmony
13. Discipline
14. Hospitality
15. Helping
16. Leadership – Pastor, Associate Ministers, Deacons, Ministry leads
17. Evangelism

What Jesus characteristic do you think is most lacking in **“your”** ability to serve others in our community? **(Pick Top 3)**

1. Compassion
2. Love
3. Concern
4. Acceptance
5. Willingness to stand up/speak up for Justice
6. Patience
7. Selflessness (Humility)
8. Faith
9. Obedience
10. Commitment
11. Conviction
12. Working together in peace, unity and harmony
13. Discipline
14. Hospitality
15. Helping
16. Leadership – Pastor, Assoc., Deacons, Ministry leads
17. Evangelism

What are **“you”** willing to sacrifice to achieve our mission of being “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community”?

1. Personal time
 2. Financial donations
 3. Volunteering my talents
 4. Becoming more involved in the educational ministries of the church (Bible Study, Sunday School)
 5. Other (Please specify)
-

Choose the answer that best represents how you feel.

FABC is living out the mission of being “The Church In The Community For The Hearts Of The Community.” **(Choose One)**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

The membership of FABC is reflective of the surrounding community. **(Choose One)**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Outreach ministries provide opportunities to share faith. **(Choose One)**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Those benefiting from outreach should be required to participate in religious/church activities. **(Choose One)**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

The church has a role in the education/economic/social development of the broader community. **(Choose One)**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

The community should engage the church for political/social advocacy regarding issues relevant to the community. **(Choose One)**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Please provide your thoughts.

What is your definition of the church?

How can we best bridge the gap between the FABC congregation and the community?

How is the present day FABC living out the early historical mission of our church?

APPENDIX E

FABC 7 YEAR OUTREACH MINISTRY VISION

FABC 7 Year Congregational Outreach Ministry Vision

Working Definition:

- † ***Congregation Outreach Ministry:*** *a local church's strategic plan for initiating people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and actions of compassion. – Matthew 4:23, 5:13, 28:19*

Years 1-2

Goals:

- † Double average weekly worship attendance (315)
- † Outreach Ministry Budget 2-4% of Annual Church Income
- † Establish Outreach Ministry Team

Actions of Compassion:

- † Expand at least 1 existing Need-meeting initiative (Spring & Fall Clothing Drive)
- † Initiate at least 1 community relationship building initiative (West End Community of Caring and Sharing Project)
- † Engage all FABC Ministries in at least 1 Actions of Compassion outreach activity

Proclamation of the Gospel:

- † Initiate congregational Personal Evangelism Training
 - Curriculum: *Becoming a Contagious Christian*
 - Initial Training: Lenten Season 2017 (Sheepfold Challenge: March 5 – April 9)
 - Subsequent Training: S.S. Class (September 10 - October 15)
- † Launch “Sunday School That Really Works” Strategy

Years 3-5

Goals:

- † Double average weekly worship attendance
- † Double % of Baptisms Outside FABC Family
- † Double % of FABC West End Membership
- † Double FABC Membership
- † Outreach Ministry Budget 4-7% of Annual Church Income
- † Hire Congregational Outreach Ministry (Evangelism) Leader

Actions of Compassion:

- † Have established 3-5 Need-meeting Ministries operating on a daily – weekly basis
- † Have all FABC ministries engaged in Quarterly or Adopt-a-Program Actions of Compassion outreach initiatives
- † Have active representation in West End Neighborhood Associations, Groups, etc.

Proclamation of the Gospel:

- † Staff all Actions of Compassion activities with church members trained in personal evangelism
- † Quarterly Proclamation of the Gospel community events (i.e. Sunday afternoon Christian Jazz Set, The God of Science Seminar/Lecture, etc.)
- † T.W.O. Services Initiative (3rd Week of the Month Proclamation outreach services)
- † Quarterly Evangelism Training
- † Revamped New Members Class to include evangelism training
- † Annual, Semi-Annual Evangelism Workshop, Small Group Discussions, etc.
- † Have 100% of the membership trained in personal evangelism

Years 6-7

Goals:

- † Same attendance and membership goals as Years 3-5
- † Outreach Ministry Budget at least 10% of Annual Church Income
- † Re-examine, re-fine, re-cast FABC Congregational Outreach Ministry Vision

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